

Question 3: Who joins terrorist groups?

Security forces, counterterrorism experts and academics have spent a great deal of effort in trying to determine what are the conditions that lead to terrorism and who is likely to become a terrorist. Findings remain contradictory and contested. This lecture takes a multidisciplinary approach and critically analyses some of the often-cited root-causes and risk-factors.

Discussion questions

1. Is there a reliable psychological profile for individual that join terrorist groups?
2. Are poverty and exclusion sufficient to cause terrorism?
3. How relevant is the role played by family and peers for individual that join terrorist groups? Discuss referring to data and examples.

Essential readings

Crenshaw, Martha. 1981. "The Causes of Terrorism." *Comparative Politics* 13 (4): 379–99.
Harris-Hogan, Shandon, and Kate Barrelle. 2018. "Young Blood: Understanding the Emergence of a New Cohort of Australian Jihadists." *Terrorism and Political Violence*, June, 1–22.

Further readings

Abadie, Alberto. 2006. "Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism." *American Economic Review* 96 (2): 50–56.
Çinar, Bekir. 2009. "The Root Causes of Terrorism." *METU Studies in Development* 36 (1): 93–119
Fahey, Susan, and Pete Simi. 2018. "Pathways to Violent Extremism: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of the US Far-Right." *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*, December, 1–25.
Horgan, John. 2008. "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 618 (1): 80–94.
Newman, Edward. 2006. "Exploring the 'Root Causes' of Terrorism." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29 (8): 749–72.
Piazza, James A. 2006. "Rooted in Poverty?: Terrorism, Poor Economic Development, and Social Cleavages." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 18 (1): 159–77.
Sike, Andrew. 2005. "Fire of Iolau: The Role of State Countermeasures in Causing Terrorism and What Needs to Be Done." In *Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, Reality and Ways Forward*, edited by Tore Bjørgo, 241–55. New York: Routledge.
Victoroff, Jeff. 2005. "The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49 (1): 3–42.

Non-peer reviewed resources

- Crenshaw, Martha. "Understanding Terrorism: What Causes Terrorism?" *Stanford CISAC - Security Matters*, March 6, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8lqEkGCLwo>
- "Pathways to Terrorism: A Conversation with Clark McCauley." *Terrorism 360. A podcast with Gary Lafree*, <https://soundcloud.com/user-823068075/ep-9-pathways-to-terrorism-a-conversation-with-clark-mccauley>.
- Roy, Olivier. 2017. "Who Are the New Jihadis?" *The Guardian*, April 13, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/apr/13/who-are-the-new-jihadis>.
- Sandler, Todd. 2018. "Does Poverty Cause Terrorism?" *OUPBlog*, October 27, 2018. <https://blog.oup.com/2018/10/does-poverty-cause-terrorism/>.
- "The Psychology of Terrorism: A Conversation with Arie Kruglanski." *Terrorism 360. A podcast with Gary Lafree*, <https://soundcloud.com/user-823068075/t360-ep4-kruglanski-mixdown>.
- "Thinking Like an Insurgent: Terrorism and Insurgency: Causes." *Stanford CISAC - Security Matters*, March 6, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ZBYD0iQoHI>.
- "Why Do People Become Islamic Extremists?" *PragerU*, June 15, 2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-IchGuL501U&t=0s&index=20&list=PLpaIbbnmwJfGBwiHLDFNmVF3rPyUI8wM4>