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Final Summary Overview
NIJ FY 12 Research on Domestic Radicalization

IDENTITY AND FRAMING THEORY, PRECURSOR ACTIVITY, AND THE RADICALIZATION PROCESS

Award Number 2012-ZA-BX-0003

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IDENTITY AND FRAMING THEORY, PRECURSOR ACTIVITY, AND THE RADICALIZATION PROCESS

I. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

Research on terrorism prior to 2010 had been described as too descriptive and atheoretical. To partially address this deficiency, the current project is anchored theoretically and empirically in two of the most widely cited perspectives on social movements and the process of radicalization: *role identity theory* and *framing theory* (Snow and Machalek, 1983; Snow and McAdam, 2000; Snow, 2004; Stryker 1980). Drawing on these two overlapping perspectives, we contend that radicalization towards violence can be theorized as a process which entails a journey. Typically, this journey begins with a non- or less-radical identity and corresponding orientation, and moves toward a more radical identity and corresponding orientation. This process enhances the likelihood of employing targeted forms of violence because the prospect of desired change is seen as laying outside the realm of legitimate modes of challenge and expression within the targeted institutional arena. As implied, a key component of the process is the adoption or evolution of a radical identity.

Five key concepts associated with the identity and framing perspectives are central to the analyses and findings: identity salience and pervasiveness, identity work, and diagnostic and prognostic framing. *Identity salience* is premised on the observation that identities are arrayed in a hierarchy, with those at the top, or most salient, in a given situation being most likely to be called on or invoked. *Pervasiveness* extends the notion of salience from one situation to multiple situations or encounters, such that the identity is in play in numerous situations. *Identity work* (Snow and Anderson 1987; Snow and McAdam 2000) encompasses a range of activities individuals and groups engage in that give meaning to themselves and others by presenting or

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attributing and sustaining identities congruent with individuals or group interests. Five types of identity work have been identified: (1) Engagement in group relevant demonstration acts or events, such as engaging in activities preparatory for the commission of violence; (2) arrangement and display of physical settings and props, such as flying or posting the confederate flag; (3) arrangement of appearance, such as engagement in cosmetic face work or body work; (4) selective association with other individuals and groups; and (5) identity talk, which involves not only the avowal and/or attribution of identities, but also talk relevant to framing. The two key framing concepts – *diagnostic and prognostic framing* – direct attention to the ways in which some issue or grievance is problematized and blame is attributed and to the call or plan for dealing with the problem.

Figure 1
Identity Convergence

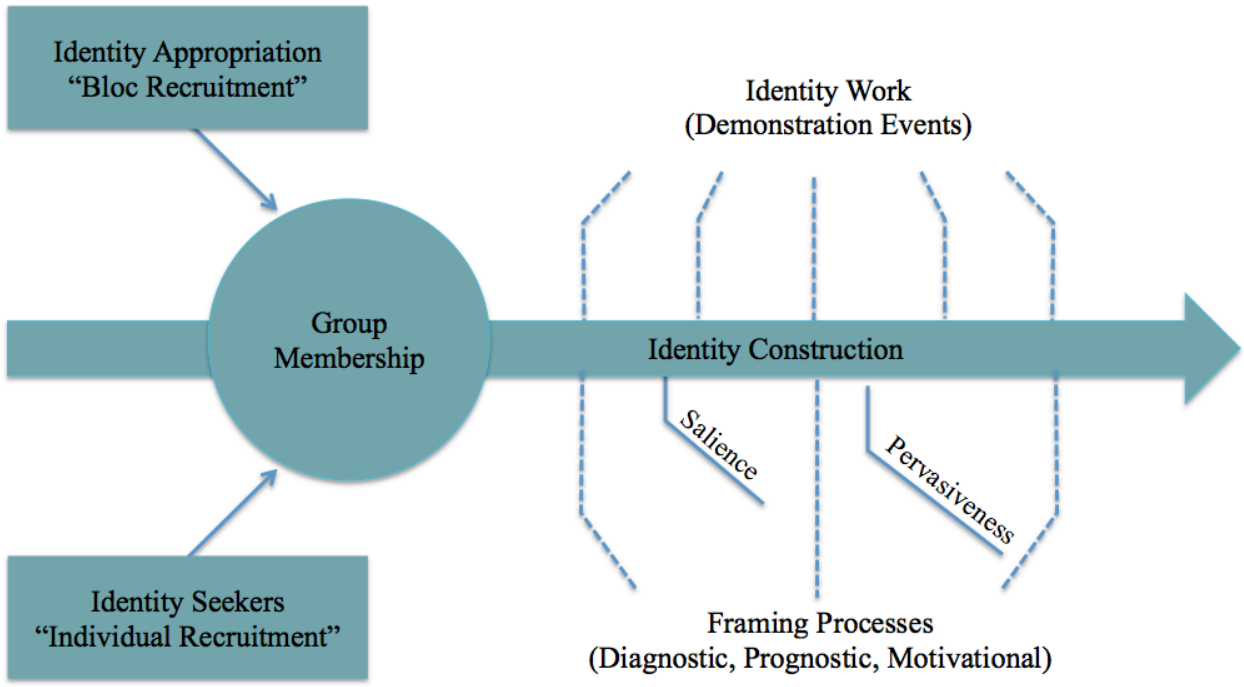

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Figure 1 provides a visual depiction of the manner in which one's identity may become radicalized. While this particular drawing focuses upon the impact of group membership, radical identities may be constructed without group affiliation. Regardless of whether this element is present or not, identity construction still involves the major concepts of salience and pervasiveness, it's emergence through diagnostic and prognostic framing, and expressive behaviors manifesting conversion to violent radicalism through demonstration events.

Our empirical analyses are anchored to and guided by these five key concepts and their interrelationships. To illustrate, we take the first type of identity work – engagement in a demonstration act or event – as an indication of identity salience, in large part because demonstration acts or events represent discrete activities that can be quantified, measured, and even time-sequenced. For example, to measure the salience of one's religious identity the frequency of church attendance might be recorded. One could argue that the *salience* of this identity, as measured by church attendance, might be reflected in the number of demonstration events that the churchgoer engages in that further confirm this identity, such as helping in the soup kitchen. The *pervasiveness* of this identity might be measured by the member's participation in public activities (if the church were opposed to abortion, one measure might be "hours spent in front of clinics protesting" or the "number of religious tracts distributed in witnessing efforts"). In our case, the precursor crimes committed by terrorists – activities committed in preparation for a terrorist incident -- may serve as the best example of demonstration events. At some point in the conversion and radicalization process, planning must move to action. Crimes must be committed, weapons must be procured, explosives stolen or manufactured, and surveillance of targets must be conducted. These activities, and the persons

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involved in them, represent some of the best opportunities to observe the dynamics in the final stages of radicalization (Cross and Snow, 2011).

Our core, orienting propositions, derived from an integration of our key concepts, postulates that: (1) *Persons who have developed a salient and pervasive identity that justifies extreme violence are more inclined to commit acts of terrorism*; and (2) *The radicalization process manifests itself in a variety of identity work processes that vary in both frequency and severity, may be predictable, and have distinct temporal and spatial dimensions*. In assessing these orienting propositions, we used the types of roles terrorist group members played and the extent of their participation in terrorist group planning as indicators of *salience* and *pervasiveness* to determine whether these concepts were related to extremist violence. Generally, these hypotheses suggested that the more salient and pervasive the terrorist identity, the greater the propensity to violence. In addition, our analyses of the role of diagnostic and prognostic framing shows the importance of these two framing processes in relation to radical, terrorist violence.

II. METHODOLOGY

We used a mixed methods approach to test our hypotheses. Data from the *American Terrorism Study* (Smith, 2006) provided the bulk of both quantitative and qualitative data used in the analysis. A description of the ATS database, the method and sample used in this project, and the types of analyses conducted are provided in the following subsections. In addition to the quantitative analytical techniques used, we employed formal qualitative comparative and fuzzy-set analysis (Ragin 2008), allowing us to systematically analyze in-depth qualitative observations.

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Sources of Data

The American Terrorism Study (ATS) is a compilation of data primarily derived from the federal criminal court records of persons indicted for "terrorism or terrorism-related activities" for the period 1980-present. In 1987, the FBI's Terrorist Research and Analysis Center (later renamed the Counterterrorism Threat Assessment and Warning Unit) provided the principal investigator with the names of persons indicted under the FBI's Counterterrorism (CT) Program. After the Murrah Federal Building bombing in 1995, the FBI, NIJ, and the P.I. collaborated with the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime in which the House Subcommittee assumed sponsorship of the ATS. In 2002, the Senate Judiciary Committee assumed this role under Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL). Since 2005, the names of international terrorists indicted in federal courts have been provided directly by the FBI through the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), while the names of domestic terrorists have been extracted primarily from the websites of U.S. Attorneys offices. As such, the persons included in the database are indicative of the FBI's official definition of terrorism (e.g., see FBI, 1998). Since the FBI has exclusive jurisdiction over the investigation of acts of terrorism against U.S. citizens or property, the ATS includes only individuals and cases prosecuted in federal criminal courts. Over the past fifteen years, the ATS has expanded from approximately 70 variables related to group affiliation, ideology, demographics, and legal and sentencing variables to over 400 variables that include information on the geospatial and temporal distribution of the pre-incident (or precursor) activities of these defendants leading up to a planned or completed terrorism incident. Older cases already in the ATS have been revisited to collect data on the additional variables.

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Data for the Current Quantitative Analysis

At the time of the current project, the ATS was tracking 1,062 federal "terrorism-related" court cases involving 2,195 indictees. However, since some of the hypotheses that we proposed to test involved temporal as well as legal data, data collection had to be completed on both the legal component and the geospatial/temporal component of the ATS for each case. Data collection on the legal aspects was complete on 421 of these cases, while geospatial/temporal data collection was complete on 267 of the cases. Of these, 217 cases had complete data for both aspects of the database. Consequently, analysis was limited to the persons and behaviors associated with these 217 federal criminal cases, about 20 percent of the total population of confirmed federal "terrorism-related" cases from 1980-2013. Five hundred forty-five persons were indicted in these 217 court cases. Some of these persons were indicted in more than one of the cases, leaving 465 unique individuals for analysis.

Table 1 provides a description of the data used in the analysis. Our individual cases were distributed among three broad, radical ideological categories – environmental or far-left, Al Qaeda (AQ) and affiliates, and far-right. Slightly over 30 percent (n=127) of these individuals were associated with environmental or far-left ideologies, while another 24 percent (n=99) were affiliated with AQ associated movements. One hundred eighty-four of the individuals, nearly 45 percent of the sample, were associated with far-right extremism. The sample was disproportionately male (87.7%, n=408), but it did include a sizeable number of females (12.3%, n=57), most of whom were affiliated with environmental or far-left groups. Educationally, the sample is quite disparate. Slightly over 40 percent of the individuals had only a GED or high school diploma. In contrast, eighty-seven of the individuals, slightly over one fourth, (26.6%) had earned a college degree. Educational data was missing on 138 (29.7%) of these persons.

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Regarding the roles these individuals played in various groups, nearly two-thirds of the sample was classified simply as "members." The remaining third were identified as having some marginal or minor leadership roles (classified as "intermediate leader") (13.9%, n=51) or clearly identifiable leadership roles (classified as "leader") (20.6%, n=76). The average age at indictment of the individuals in the sample was 36 years. The demographic characteristics of the sample are consistent with the overall distribution of the total population of terrorists in the ATS database, leading us to believe that the sample is representative of the population of terrorists indicted in federal courts over the past thirty five years.

Table 1
Characteristics of the Sample

Categorical Variables	**N**	**%**
tegory		
Environmental/Far-left	127	31.0
Far-right		Ca44.
	184	9
AQAM	99	24.1
Total	410	100.0
Missing (Excluded)	55	11.8
Gender		
Female	57	12.3
Male	408	87.7
Total	465	100
Education		
GED or Less	70	21.4
High School Diploma	69	21.1
Some College or Vocational	101	30.9
College Degree	87	26.6
Total	327	100.0
Missing	138	29.7
Group Rank		
Member	241	65.5
Intermediate Leader	51	13.9
Leader	76	20.6
Total	368	100.0
Missing (Unknown)	97	20.9

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Continuous Variables	N (valid)	Mean	Sum	Median	Min-Max
Age†	447	35.62	NA	35	16-72
Length of Membership†	136	47.48	NA	32	1-98
Number of Meetings*	208	4.02	836	3	1-30
Number of Criminal Acts	465	5.46	2,538	2	0-63
Number of Ancillary Acts*	215	4.47	960	2	1-46
Number of Preparatory Acts*	312	7.69	2,399	4	1-73
Number of Antecedent Acts*	372	9.03	3,359	6	1-103
Number of Incidents	465	1.36	634	0	0-40
Total Counts Charged**	453	6.68	3,028	4	1-63
Count Severity†	418	22.13	NA	25	2-29
Count Severity- Weighted†	418	45.49	NA	36	2-184

*Indicates 0's removed for analysis
**Indicates outliers removed
†Indicates missing values removed

In the second portion of Table 1 (shown above), other than "age" which was discussed earlier, the sample size (denoted in the "N" column) reflects the number of persons for whom data was available. For example, of the 465 unique individuals in the current analysis, information on length of membership was found on 136 of these individuals, while information on "number of criminal acts" and "number of terrorism incidents" was found on all 465 persons in the sample. The second column provides the mean number of acts per person, while the third column provides the total number of data points for that variable available for analysis. For example, we recorded 3,359 "precursor" or "antecedent" acts associated with 372 of the 465 persons in the sample. Of these 3,359 antecedent acts, 2,399 were categorized as "preparatory" to a specific terrorist incident. The remaining 960 antecedent acts were recorded as "ancillary" – behaviors committed by the individuals that may have been related to "order maintenance" within the group, meetings that were not specifically related to the planning for a specific terror incident, or any other precursor activities that were not specifically identifiable as "preparatory."

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The "ancillary" category is the default – if we were unable to positively identify that a specific precursor behavior was preparatory for a specific terrorism incident, it was recorded as "ancillary."

For the analyses conducted for this project, each "preparatory behavior" was considered as a "demonstration event." This is not a perfect indicator of the concept. Some ancillary acts could easily have been considered as demonstration events and some preparatory behaviors may not have qualified as demonstration events in the strictest sense of the word. For example, Bob Mathews, the leader of the Order, apparently directed three of his subordinates to kill Walter West, a member of the Order who had been suspected of talking too much about the group's activities (Martinez, 1988). The murder of Walter West was later described by one of the killers as a turning point in their commitment to the Order. While such an event should be considered as a "demonstration event," it is recorded in the ATS database as an ancillary act since it was not pursuant to preparation for a specific terrorism incident. However, the cost and difficulty of re-examining each of the 3,359 antecedent acts associated with the persons used in the analysis precluded such a detailed confirmation of each demonstration event.

The 465 persons in the sample were linked to 405 planned or completed terrorism incidents in the United States. Terrorist incidents that fell under the investigative authority of the FBI and hence, the jurisdiction of the federal court system, but occurred overseas, were excluded from the analysis due to the difficulty of geospatially coding the data. Consequently, incidents such as the African Embassy bombings are not included in the analysis, even though the defendants were indicted in a U.S. District Court.

The 465 individuals were charged in federal court with violations of 3,028 criminal counts, an average of 6.68 counts per person. When possible, these counts were ranked in

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severity on a scale from 1-28, using a system derived from the National Survey of Crime Severity (Wolfgang et al., 1985) and utilized by the research team in previous analyses (Smith and Damphousse, 1996; 1998). For "count severity," the score given to each individual (418 of the 465 persons) reflects the crime severity of the most severe offense the offender was charged with – usually the lead offense in the indictment. "Count severity – weighted" refers to the cumulative severity score for the individual when each of the counts are added together.

The precursor behaviors were "time-stamped" and geocoded when possible. The precursor acts were also linked to the individuals involved so that demographic and behavioral traits could be included in the analysis. Court records, trial transcripts, and open source media documents associated with each person and incident were examined to extract qualitative data to assist in informing each proposition and hypothesis. Utilizing a comparative approach to qualitative analysis, we were able to distill the large volume of rich descriptive data into formal variables consistent with the quantitative components of the project. Identity and framing dimensions were disaggregated into the distinct framing tasks (diagnostic, prognostic and motivational) as well as the facets of identity work (face work, selective association, verbal identity construction, identity escalation and the procurement and arrangement of "props").

Statistical tests were performed on six different propositions related to *salience*, *pervasiveness*, and *identity work* (See Table 2). When possible, each proposition was measured with multiple hypotheses. Salience, for example, was measured using two different operationalized variables (number of meetings attended and length of group membership). Both of these independent variables (as surrogate measures of salience) were then tested against three dependent variables. In all, sixteen hypotheses were tested on three of the major concepts in

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framing and identity theory – salience, pervasiveness, and identity work. Individual level data were used in all of the tests.

Table 2
Operationalization of the Concepts and Variables Tested Quantitatively

Concept Tested	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Proposition 1: The greater the salience of a radical identity, the greater the involvement in radical criminal activities.		
Salience	Number of Meetings Attended	Number of Criminal Acts Committed
		Number of Terrorism Incidents Committed
		Number of Counts Charged
Salience	Length of Group Membership	Number of Criminal Acts Committed
		Number of Terrorism Incidents Committed
		Number of Counts Charged
Proposition 2: The greater the pervasiveness of a radical identity, the greater the involvement in radical criminal activities.		
Pervasiveness	Rank in Group	Number of Criminal Acts Committed
		Number of Terrorism Incidents Committed
		Number of Counts Charged
Proposition 3: As one's involvement in a radical group increases, so will the volume of demonstration events and criminal severity of an individual's "identity work."		
Identity Work	Number of Demonstration Events (Preparatory Acts)	Count Severity
		Weighted Count Severity
		Total Counts Charged
		Number of Incidents Committed
Identity Work	Rank in Group	Number of Preparatory Acts
		Number of Antecedent Acts
		Number of Ancillary Acts

Qualitative Analysis

In addition to the statistical analyses, we utilized two complimentary qualitative analytical approaches: iterative grounded theory development and qualitative comparative analysis (QCA). Qualitative coding for this study was conducted in multiple iterations in line with the methods outlined by Charmaz (2002), with particular attention to the integration of emergent themes in each subsequent round of coding. Coding decisions were based on extensive case knowledge of each organization and set of actors, allowing for adjudication of boundary or hard-to-classify cases. After multiple rounds of grounded theory coding, we developed a number

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of analytical categories encompassing the range of activities associated with extremist political violence. These categories were Organizational Viability (membership size and duration or life span), Frame Crystallization (a measure of shared collective action frames), Political Context (the mainstream political climate in the location of the organization) and Accessibility (in terms of the openness versus closed, exclusive nature of the organization). We then utilized these categories in the design of our QCA. QCA and its non-dichotomous variant, fuzzy-set QCA (fsQCA) are formal qualitative methods with the aim of bridging qualitative research and quantitative analytical methodologies (Ragin 2000). In contrast to the correlational results of regression-based statistical instruments, QCA is geared towards the identification of complex causal relationships, emphasizing configurational solutions. The results are non-mutually exclusive "pathways" to the same outcomes, allowing researchers to observe the extensive variation in causal relationships.

III. MAJOR FINDINGS

Quantitative Findings

The results of our quantitative analyses are provided in Table 3. Bivariate correlations are shown (r values), along with the significance results of one-tailed T-tests. Fourteen of the sixteen hypotheses tested were statistically significant in the predicted direction. Salience was assessed using two different independent variables (number of meetings attended and length of membership) with three dependent variables (crimes committed, terrorism incident committed and federal counts charged). All six of these hypotheses were statistically significant. The more group meetings one attended and the longer one had been a group member, the greater the number of preparatory crimes committed, terrorist incidents committed, and counts charged. Of the three dependent variables, number of federal counts charged was the weakest of the three

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measures. Moreover, qualitative observations suggest that sustained organizational activity was most critical in cases of extreme violence (particularly those resulting in human casualties) as observed, for example, in the Covenant, the Sword, and the Arm of the Lord (CSA); the Order; the Phineas Priesthood; and the White Patriot Party. The qualitative comparative, configurational analysis confirmed that far-right, racialist organizations were the most violent of this case-type.

Table 3
Outcome of Statistical Tests by Hypothesis

Concept Tested	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Outcome
Salience	Number of Meetings Attended	Number of Criminal Acts Committed	r=.50, p<.001
		Number of Terrorism Incidents Committed	r=.17, p<.01
		Number of Counts Charged	r=.11, p<.05
Salience	Length of Group Membership	Number of Criminal Acts Committed	r=.33, p<.001
		Number of Terrorism Incidents Committed	r=.35, p<.001
		Number of Counts Charged	r=.27, p<.001
Pervasiveness	Rank in Group	Number of Criminal Acts Committed	r=.20, p<.001
		Number of Terrorism Incidents Committed	r=.03, NS
		Number of Counts Charged	r=.16, p<.001
Identity Work	Number of Demonstration Events (Preparatory Acts)	Count Severity	r=.14, p<.01
		Weighted Count Severity	r=.23, p<.001
		Total Counts Charged	r=.42, p<.001
		Number of Incidents Committed	r=.06, NS
Identity Work	Rank in Group	Number of Preparatory Acts	r=.23, p<.001
		Number of Antecedent Acts	r=.21, p<.001
		Number of Ancillary Acts	r=.04, NS

The identity of radicals, particularly those inclined towards violence, will be pervasive, not in the sense that they necessarily announce their identity in public settings (although they might), but in the sense that identity guides what is said and done in a variety of settings or situations. Leadership roles provide these opportunities, especially since such roles catapult the incumbents into a broader range of group/movement related situations and carry with them a broader set of obligations/expectations than holds for rank and file, subordinate members. Therefore, pervasiveness was measured using "rank in the group" and tested against the same three dependent variables as salience. Two of the three hypotheses were highly significant

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($p<.001$), while "number of terrorism incidents committed" was not significant. In general, we found that while "rank in group" was significantly related to all three dependent variables, among far-right organizations the leaders of some of these groups relinquished active participation in the commission of terrorism incidents to subordinate members. Examples include indictments against Louis Beam,[1] Robert Miles, and Richard Butler, all of whom were alleged to hold leading roles in The Order, but who were acquitted of all charges in cases involving this group. These individual cases were sufficient to render the relationship between group rank and number of terrorism incidents committed statistically insignificant. Yet, we also find a few counter-examples as in the case of the nation of Yahweh. Members who were charged with the most crimes were the elders, who went to prison with Yahweh ben Yahweh, because they were masterminds of the criminal acts with which the group was charged. The subordinates, on the other hand were engaged in organizational infrastructural and precursor work. What accounts for the different patterns remains a topic for inquiry.

Identity work as a whole was operationalized in two different ways. First, it could be viewed as an indicator of one's rank in the group and secondly, as indicated by the number of preparatory acts in which one participated. Although not precisely consistent with the earlier conceptual elaboration, in essence, we contend that "rank in group" affected the volume of demonstration events, which in turn, would be significantly related to the number and severity of crimes committed. Five of the seven hypotheses related to identity work so operationalized were highly statistically significant. Leaders of terrorist groups were found to commit more preparatory, antecedent and criminal acts than subordinate members. For example, as noted above, in the quasi-religious black extremist movement Yahweh, movement leaders were

[1] Beam, it should be noted, is credited with the creation of "leaderless resistance," which had the specific intent of reducing the criminal and civil liability of group leaders.

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responsible for almost the entirety of all violence against persons. In many cases, leadership roles were also tied to commission of such violent acts, as promotions were often contingent on completed terrorist acts. Somewhat expectedly, there was no difference between leaders and subordinate behavior relative to "ancillary" precursor conduct (behaviors not specifically associated with planning or preparation for a terrorism incident). When examining the number of demonstration events (as measured by their participation in "preparatory" acts), we found that the greater the number of demonstration events an actor participated in, the greater the number and severity[2] of crimes these persons were charged with.

Many of the hypotheses and corresponding findings generated by the role identity perspective are also consistent with other noted theoretical models, particularly differential association theory (Sutherland, 1939), social learning theory (Akers, 1998), and rational theories like the routine activities approach (Cohen and Felson, 1979). However, when taken as a whole, the findings from this analysis not only provide exceptionally strong support for the identity theories invoked, but also provide a more nuanced quantitative understanding of the dynamics of radical violence.

Qualitative Findings

The results of multiple rounds of QCA reinforce the findings of the above statistical analyses while shedding even more nuanced light on additional relationships between the hypotheses and the outcome of violence. As previously discussed, the qualitative analyses examined an extensive series of possible causal conditions, including organizational characteristics such as structure and size, internal dynamics such as recruitment and membership (in line with the statistical analyses), political context, and framing processes. Our findings

[2] *Count severity* was measured as the severity of the lead, or most severe, offense against the person in the indictment, while *weighted count severity* was measured as the sum of the severity scores for all counts for which the person was indicted.

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indicate that although other categories of facilitative conditions are causally contributive, framing processes constitute the most essential causal relationships pertaining to the outcome of violence. We find that even organizations with significant organizational capacity in terms of size and longevity are substantially less capable of enacting terrorist events in the absence of strong collective action frames that guide the resultant violent behavior. The results of an analysis of causal necessity are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4
Test of Necessary Conditions

Analytical Category	Property Destruction	Violence Against Persons
Frame Crystallization	Necessary	Necessary
Organizational Viability	Below threshold	Below threshold
Recruitment	Not necessary	Not necessary
Political Context	Not necessary	Not necessary

In the course of the analysis, violence was disaggregated into two forms: violence against persons and property destruction. Moreover, we distinguished two forms of framing activity. Diagnostic frame crystallization can be observed in a problem identification or grievance shared by multiple participants of an incident or organization. Similarly, prognostic frame crystallization represents the prescription for action or solution identified by a movement organization to resolve the grievances. These two forms of frame crystallization proved to be the strongest causal linkages in our necessity analysis for both property destruction and violence against persons, with other conditions exhibiting weaker relationships.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

In sum, these findings enable us to make several key points concerning the utility and applicability of the analysis. One, the findings suggest the importance of taking into account various markers of identity, namely the dimensions of salience and pervasiveness, and associated

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markers of identity work in trying to grasp, and even predict, the precursors and correlates of extreme political violence like terrorism. Indeed, it is arguable that the commission of terrorist acts, whatever their exact nature, is unlikely in the absence of a highly salient and pervasive identity that is closely linked to the corresponding terrorist organization, rather real or putative, and its ideology. If this is true, then more attention needs to be devoted to tracking the crystallization of terrorist identities via further exploration of the variables or markers considered herein. Two, the findings highlight the importance of looking beyond taken-for-granted assumptions regarding the violence of certain movements' ideologies or their capacity for violence on the basis of size and longevity. Rather, we find that it is only through nuanced attention to the specific framing processes conducted within the context of movement organizations that we may observe any causal relationships between ideational work and violent outcomes.

Three, by both implication and observation, these findings underscore the importance of framing processes as a central mechanism though which identities are focused and sharpened. This is not so obvious in the above tables, but the importance of framing processes – namely diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing – and their crystallization becomes quite evident in the qualitative comparative analysis. Thus, the findings highlight the role of identity and framing processes in relation to the radicalization process and particularly in relation to various terrorist acts – whether preparatory, antecedent, ancillary, or criminal – and their interconnection.

Finally, beyond the theoretical implications mentioned above, the findings have important implications for law enforcement and prosecutorial intervention. Law enforcement, investigatory, and prosecutorial efforts to prevent terrorism may also play a critical role in

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disrupting the radicalization process. Although the impact of legal intervention on disassociation with radical or terrorist groups has not been studied extensively, some research has indicated that law enforcement intervention can have a significant impact on the recruiting and lifespan of a terrorist organization (Smith and Damphousse, 2009). Other researchers have noted that although successful interdiction by law enforcement is arguably the most prominent reason for a terrorist group's demise, Freilich, Chermak, and Caspi (2009) warn that overreaction by law enforcement may have a backlash effect. The strategies used by law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies in defining and labeling violent radical groups may have a significant impact on the construction of radical identities of potential recruits and unindicted adherents and merits further examination.

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