

**"The Emergence of Terrorism Studies as a Field"**

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***abstract:***

This chapter describes the emergence of terrorism studies as a field. It makes several central claims, including that both "terrorism" as an object of knowledge and "terrorism studies" have a history, which we need to understand in order to understand the problem of "terrorism" in contemporary society. Terrorism studies emerged in the 1970s, as the problem of terrorism came to be differentiated from other forms of political violence, most notably, insurgency. Terrorism studies has never attained the status of a strictly bounded professional field, and this has had consequences for both the production of terrorism experts and knowledge about terrorism itself. In addition, the production of terrorism expertise has been constrained by the phenomenon of "anti-knowledge," the designation of certain modes of relating to terrorism as taboo. While terrorism remains a fertile and prolific ground for the production of knowledge, terrorism expertise remains highly problematic field.

***keywords:*** terrorism studies, expertise, field, discipline, profession, knowledge

## **Introduction: the co-construction of "terrorism" and "terrorism studies"**

Why is it important to study the history of terrorism expertise? This chapter begins with the assertion that "terrorism" is not a natural category, but one with a history, and that the field of terrorism expertise came into existence together with the contemporary conceptualization of terrorism. This does not mean that terrorism is not "real," merely that both the events that comprise "terrorism" and the ways that we understand the problem have been shaped by social and political forces. This history can denaturalize popular assumptions about the problem and the field of knowledge: to show that both understandings of the problem, and the construction of expert knowledge about it, have changed over time, and should therefore be understood as both contingent (rather than necessary or natural), and potentially subject to further change. This chapter argues that the expert field and the terrorism discourse have been co-produced, and therefore, if we wish to understand the terrorism discourse (along with its limitations and possibilities), we must understand the structuring of the expert field. A key question in studies of terrorism expertise is whether experts have autonomy, or whether they primarily mirror the interests of states and other powerful actors. If it is the case, as some have suggested,<sup>1</sup> that terrorism expertise is primarily a smokescreen for reproducing the views of states, then it makes little sense to devote further attention to the expert field, rather than the field of state power itself. If, on the other hand, as I have argued elsewhere (Stampnitzky 2011; Stampnitzky 2013), experts do have (limited) autonomy, then the question of how and when expertise is shaped becomes ever more crucial.

## **What do we know about the history of "terrorism studies"?**

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., (Bartosiewicz 2008; Burnett and Whyte 2005; Herman and O'Sullivan 1989)

There is a small but growing literature on the history of "terrorism" and terrorism expertise, with useful overviews including Alex Schmid's *Political Terrorism: A Research Guide to Concepts, Theories, Data Bases and Literature* (Schmid 2011), Ranstorp's (2007) edited volume on "Mapping terrorism expertise," and Silke (2004). Some of the core questions under debate include: is "terrorism studies" properly a field or discipline at all, to what extent are terrorism experts and terrorism studies autonomous from the state and other centers of power, and what constraints or taboos do terrorism researchers face?

Some of the earliest research on the emergence and development of terrorism studies comes from Edna Ferguson Reid, whose 1983 doctoral dissertation concluded that the field "seems to be developing into a heterogeneous body of knowledge with ill-defined boundaries.... blurred by the large number of authors, few specialists, a proliferation of title, and embryonic nucleus of journals and few identifiable institutions" (Reid 1983:107), but which also asserted that by the late 1970s/early 1980s there was an "invisible college" of terrorism researchers in place. More recently, Reid has argued that terrorism research in the United States has been highly influenced by the media and the government, leading to "invisible colleges of pro-Western terrorism researchers and a generation of many terrorism studies from a one-sided perspective of terrorism from below" (Reid 1997:91). Similarly, Avishag Gordon has published a number of studies addressing the question of why terrorism studies has not developed into a mature scientific field, and whether it is likely to become one (Gordon 2005), with her most recent work arguing that it is in the process of becoming an autonomous discipline (Gordon 2010).

On the question of the relative autonomy of terrorism expertise, the strongest negative view comes from Herman and O'Sullivan (1989), who seek to debunk what they call the

"terrorism industry." Terrorism "expertise," they suggest, is merely a cover for the interests of the state, with "these institutions and associated experts meet a 'demand' for intellectual-ideological service by states and other powerful interests, analogous to the demand for tanks by the army or advertising copy by the producers of soap" (Herman and O'Sullivan 1989:7). Other early critiques of the field also came from the work of Christopher Hitchens (Hitchens 1986) and Edward Said, who, writing in 1988, suggested that "Its gurus. . . are journalists with obscure, even ambiguous, backgrounds. Most writing about terrorism is brief, pithy, totally devoid of the scholarly armature of evidence, proof, argument" (Said 2001 (1988):150). More recently, Miller and Mills have focused on documenting the dominance of what they term "orthodox" terrorism experts in the mainstream media, arguing that "what has been called an 'invisible college' of experts operates as a nexus of interests connecting academia with military, intelligence and government agencies, with the security industry and the media" (Miller and Mills 2009:414).

Others, rather than aiming to document the exclusion of "dissenting" researchers or attributing the shaping of terrorism discourse to a complete lack of autonomy in the field, have focused on the particular social and historical constraints that have shaped the production of knowledge. For example, Remi Brulin has traced the history of terrorism discourse in the UN and American political and media sites (Brulin 2011), with a particular focus on how the discourse of terrorism came to exclude violence by states (Brulin 2013). Anthropologists Zulaika and Douglass have argued that the terrorism discourse is shaped by "taboos", which prevent serious analysis of terrorism (Zulaika and Douglass 1996). And others (e.g. Ilardi 2004) have analyzed why terrorism researchers have tended to avoid first-hand contact with terrorists, a phenomenon which I have elsewhere labeled "antiknowledge" (Stampnitzky 2013). Thus, in addition to tracing the origins of terrorism expertise, this chapter will reflect on these core

questions of whether "terrorism studies" has become a field, to what extent terrorism experts are autonomous, and the various other constraints shaping the discourse and the field.

### **How terrorism became an object of expertise**

How and why did the discourse on terrorism and the field of expertise emerge? The answer lies in a combination of new sorts of events, new sorts of state responses, and new sorts of experts (Stampnitzky 2013). A first crucial turning point dates to the late 1960s and early 1970s. This period witnessed the rise of an innovative form of political-theatrical violence, exemplified by the media-centric hijackings and hostage takings perpetrated by Palestinian nationalists in the years after the 1967 war. While political violence by sub-state actors against civilians was, of course, not new, what was new here was that nationalist and anti-colonial violence transgressed geopolitical boundaries in new ways. Whereas such political violence had previously generally been fairly locally contained, targeting sites within the territories under contention, this new form of political-theatrical violence began to target Americans and other "Westerners," both as direct victims, and as the intended media audience. It did so by striking at transnational sites such as international air travel and, in an incident that came to be seen a seminal trigger for the U.S. concern with terrorism, the Olympic games.

On September 5, 1972, eight members of the Palestinian national group, Black September, entered the dormitory of the Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, killing two and taking nine others hostage. The subsequent crisis reverberated around the world, broadcast live to an audience estimated at 900 million television viewers worldwide by the global media that had gathered for the Olympic games.<sup>2</sup> While this event was an important turning point, events

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<sup>2</sup> These events have been dramatized in films ((Macdonald 1999); (Spielberg 2005) and books (Reeve 2001). See also (Stampnitzky 2013) for a more in-depth analysis of these events and the response they precipitated.

alone do not immediately or transparently lead to changes in discourse. Rather, transformations occur through a combination of events and the subsequent struggles over how they should be defined, and over who has the authority to do this defining.

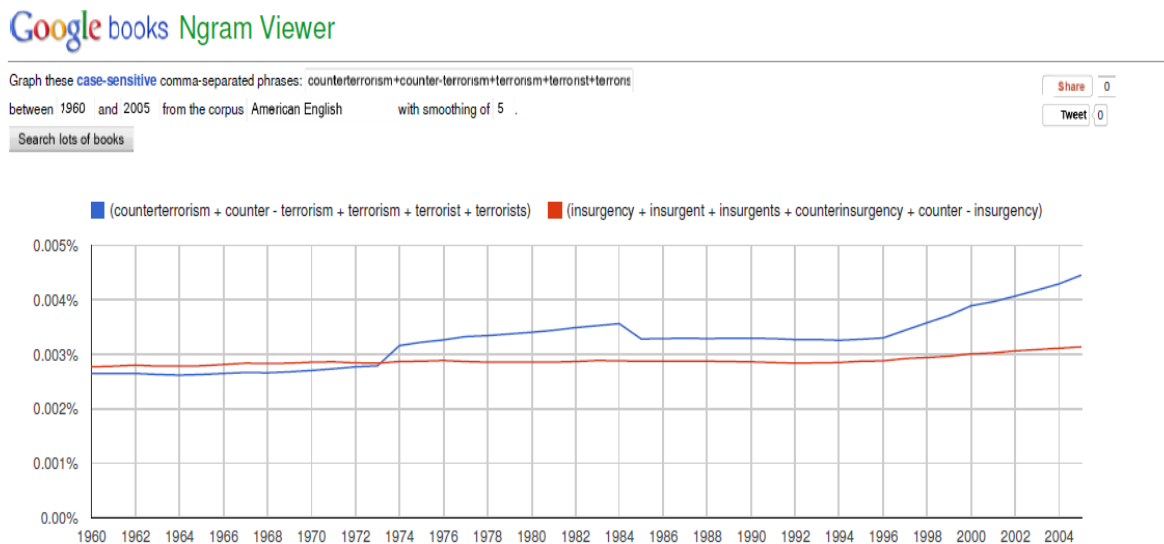
While some called the attacks "terrorism" right away, it was not yet clear what exactly this entailed, or whether terrorism was indeed the proper framework for making sense of these events. The *New York Times* wrote that "yesterday's murderous assault in Munich plumbed new depths of criminality" (1972a) while world leaders condemned the attacks as "insane terror", an "insane assault", "an abhorrent crime" and the work of "sick minds who do not belong to humanity," and U.S. President Nixon condemned them as "outlaws who will stop at nothing to accomplish goals" (1972b).

The Olympic attacks spurred the American government to take action in ways that earlier hijackings and hostage-takings had not. One significant form that this action would take was the calling into being of a new field of expertise. Shortly after the events at Munich, President Nixon established a Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism, the first U.S. government body specially devoted to terrorism. The State Department and the Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism commissioned studies, organized conferences, and consulted internal and external researchers, all in the name of developing an understanding of this "new" problem of terrorism. By 1976, the State Department's Office of External Research was managing a "quarter-million-dollar program of research and analysis on the subject" (U.S. Department of State 1976).

One result of this activity was that, within the space of a few years, terrorism was transformed from a topic with almost nothing written on it, to a problem around which entire institutes, journals, and conferences were organized. The image below (figure 1) illustrates the

rise of "terrorism" and its surpassing of "insurgency" (and related terms) in 1972 and the years just after.

**Figure 1: "Insurgency" vs. "Terrorism"**



By 1977, at least eleven bibliographic catalogues had been compiled to keep track of an ever-increasing number of publications, and a few years later, one observer would write that "authors have spilled almost as much ink as the actors of terrorism have spilled blood" (Schmid and Jongman 1988:xiii). The first American conference on terrorism was held in 1972, and by 1978, twenty-nine such conferences had been held, with presentations from over four hundred distinct individuals (Stampnitzky 2013). And this was not simply a quantitative increase, but also the growth of a set of relationships among those who were taking on a new identity, that of the "terrorism expert." By the late 1970s, a networked group of terrorism scholars had emerged; sometimes calling themselves, not without a touch of irony, the "terrorism mafia." The editors of a book collecting papers from two conferences held in 1976 and 1977 proclaimed that: "The study of terrorism has now 'arrived' internationally, as evidenced by the birth of a new

international multidisciplinary journal, *Terrorism*; the proliferation of scientific conferences and papers; and the growth of university research and teaching on the subject." (Alexander, Carlton, and Wilkinson 1979:ix).

However, to understand the emergence of terrorism expertise, we need to understand not only how there came to be terrorism experts, but how "terrorism" came to be a distinct object of knowledge. This occurred through a process by which "terrorism" was differentiated from "insurgency", which had previously been the primary discourse through which political violence was understood. The earliest expert discourses on terrorism grew directly out of the discourse on "insurgency" but it would take several additional years for "terrorism" to become fully differentiated from "insurgency" and take the key features that characterize the discourse today.

### **From counterinsurgency to counterterrorism**

Although the events they deal with, including bombings, hijackings, and assassinations, may appear similar, the discourses of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism differed significantly in their conceptualizations of the problem, its causes, and the potential responses they tended to suggest. While the counterinsurgency discourse tended to conceptualize insurgents and counterinsurgents as parallel roles, the discourse on terrorism would be characterized by an ongoing tension over whether or not terrorists were necessarily evil, pathological, irrational individuals and organizations, fundamentally different from normal actors.

Within the discourse of "insurgency," violent actors were portrayed as rational actors, with coherent goals, which we may or may not condemn. In the discourse of "terrorism," on the other hand, violent actors were understood as evil and irrational, both in their methods and their



ultimate goals. Integrally tied to this shift was the move from understanding "terror" as a tactic which any sort of group might employ to thinking of "terrorist" as an identity. This identity would come to almost contain its own explanation: terrorists are evil, irrational actors whose action is driven not by normal interests or political motives but, instead, by their very nature. Within the insurgency framework, however, it was possible, and even common, to separate an evaluation of the tactics a group used from an evaluation of their goals, with the rise of the terrorism framework, evaluations of goals and tactics would come to be inextricably intertwined.

Counterinsurgent writers frequently expressed a degree of respect for their opponents that would be quite unusual in the terrorism literature. As the preface to one of the classic works of modern counterinsurgency, Roger Trinquier's (1964) *Modern Warfare*, would put it, the author approached the insurgents with "the cold respect of a professional warrior. He describes an enemy who is deeply committed to his cause, and ingenious in its pursuit" (Trinquier 2006 (1964):xii). Within the counterinsurgency discourse, "terror" was viewed as but one stage in a broader process of insurgency or revolution – a stage through which groups could pass without permanently tainting their reputations.

Typical of this approach were the participants at a 1962 counterinsurgency symposium at the U.S. government-funded think tank, RAND. Analysts at this conference did not reflexively condemn terrorism, but instead spoke of the possibility of "using terror wisely and selectively" The report from this conference starts out by discussing structural problems that may lead to guerrilla movements in different parts of the world: problems such as unemployment, inequality, and colonialism. An acknowledgment of the importance of a "cause" to insurgents and guerrillas was almost universal in this literature, and imposed on counterinsurgency experts the importance of understanding insurgents' "minds, their mentality and their motives" (Paget 1967:162). A

similar approach is evidenced at a 1962 symposium on "limited war" (another term for counterinsurgency) held at SORO (the Department of Defense sponsored "special operations research office"). The report from this conference illustrates both the perceived need for understanding insurgents and the social causes of insurgency, and the articulated goal of mobilizing these knowledges in counter-insurgency strategies. As the preface to the symposium report asserted,

Whether one is concerned with programs to alleviate political, social, or economic sources of discontent, with techniques of indirect influence, with the social environment in which actions occur, or with the social and political factors which are targets of action, the kind of underlying knowledge required is the understanding and prediction of human behavior at the individual, political and social group, and society levels (Lybrand 1962:x).

Aspects of this insurgency framework, in which "terror" was seen as more a tactic than a defining act, carried over into the earliest expert analyses of terrorism. These continuities between the insurgency discourse and the early expert discourse on terrorism can be seen in the scope of the debate on terrorism in the first years after it was identified as a problem. At the very first American conference on terrorism, held in 1972 at the U.S. State Department, there was a general consensus that "nearly every variety of political and ethnic group is likely under certain (generally desperate) circumstances to resort to terrorism," that terrorism "is a tool not confined to opposition forces; it can also be applied by established regimes," and that "terrorism was the product of frustration induced by unresolved grievances" (Perenyi 1972). Similarly, a 1974 U.S. government memo on "Guidelines for dealing with terrorism with international ramifications"

noted that, “The US Government recognizes the merit of elimination of causes of terrorism, including legitimate grievances which motivate potential terrorists.”

By the mid 1970s, however, discussions of terrorism had begun to move away from the counterinsurgency framework, and towards a re-conceptualization of terrorism as a practice that defined a certain type of actor: "the terrorist." Speakers at a 1976 State Department conference agreed that terrorism was the activity of sub-state actors, “doubted that the direct causes of terrorism could be discovered in political or socioeconomic conditions” and “were skeptical of the argument that the way to stop terrorism was to 'remove its causes;” (Johnson 1976:18). At this conference, the question of whether or not terrorists could ever be “freedom fighters” was hotly debated, with the majority of presenters arguing that the categories were mutually exclusive. This very opposition, between “terrorists” and “freedom fighters,” which may seem almost obvious today, would have been relatively nonsensical within the earlier counterinsurgency discourse, which did not pose these as mutually exclusive categories.

The contrast between the discussion at this second State Department conference, held in 1976, and the first one, held just four years prior, is striking. At the 1972 conference, there had been a general consensus that a variety of different types of actors, even including states, might commit terrorism; that terrorism was generally caused by concrete grievances; and that these grievances might even sometimes be legitimate. In other words, while at the 1972 conference, "terrorism" was understood very similarly to how political violence had been conceptualized within the prior "counterinsurgency" framework, by the 1976 conference, almost all of the major assumptions of that discourse had been overturned. Terrorism, by the mid-1970s, was assumed to be a particular type of action, committed by particular types of actors, with a particular moral and political valence.

### **Is terrorism studies a "field"?**

By the end of the 1970s, both terrorism experts and "terrorism" as a distinct object of knowledge had emerged. But what was the social structure of this field of terrorism expertise? What forces shaped the production and regulation of experts and expertise? Although the study of terrorism was, and is, a booming field, whether measured in terms of funding, publications, or numbers of aspiring experts, it has defied sociological expectations of what a scientific field, discipline, or profession ought to look like. As I have argued elsewhere, terrorism studies is best understood as an "interstitial space of knowledge production," interacting with multiple social fields, most significantly, academia, the media, and the state. Further, this space of terrorism studies is characterized by an ongoing struggle between those who would institutionalize it as a "science" and forces that tend to pull it back into the political field (Stampnitzky 2011:3).

The sociological literature on expertise has tended to focus on fairly bounded arenas such as academic disciplines and professions, tracing processes such as institutionalization, professionalization, and boundary maintenance (see e.g. Abbott 1988; Bourdieu 1993; Bourdieu 1996; Bourdieu 2005; Gieryn 1983; Larson 1977). However, these conceptualizations do not adequately describe the field of terrorism studies. Unlike archetypal examples of profession or discipline such as medicine, physics, or economics, terrorism studies has neither been able to establish control over both the definition of their particular problem nor the production and certification of legitimate experts. In fact, one of the most consistent features of the field since its formation is that almost anyone can become a "terrorism expert." Those occupying the role range from scholars to journalists to the self-taught or self-proclaimed.

Whether one looks at television, print media, or government consultants, experts come from a wide variety of backgrounds, many even with little background that would seem to qualify them for the role of expert on terrorism. More surprisingly, even large numbers of those publishing in scholarly journals and presenting at conferences on the subject have relatively scarce training. The first terrorism experts emerged, for the most part, not out of academia, but from think tanks, journalism, and the state. This continued as the field developed, with large proportions of those presenting at terrorism conferences and publishing in terrorism studies journals being "one-timers," with no background in the field and often no future engagement.<sup>3</sup> This pattern would lead many of those more consistently engaged in the field to decry that the lack of barriers to entry in terrorism studies occasioned an opportunistic approach to the field, with outsiders seeing it as an easy way to get publications, with little sustained engagement necessary. This continues to be true today, with large numbers of new experts emerging after the events of 9/11 in particular, and many of these with no prior training or experience in the subject.

This matters because it means that those who study terrorism lack the ability to regulate who may speak, or what will count as expertise. While this is also a challenge faced by other, more "disciplined" areas of study, ranging from sociology to economics, the difference here is between fields in which there are certified or recognized experts who can attempt to draw on their authority (whether more or less successfully) to intervene in public debate, as opposed to a situation in terrorism studies where not only are there no certified experts, no group of experts

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<sup>3</sup> Of almost 2000 individuals presenting at conferences on terrorism between 1972 and 2001, 84% of these were "one-timers," making only one appearance (Stampnitzky 2011). Similarly, a study by Silke (2004:69) found more than 80% of journal articles on terrorism to be by one-time authors.

has been able to fully establish disciplinary authority to impose a definition of what it is they are talking about.

Attempts to stabilize the definition of terrorism have been a constant feature of terrorism studies. However, these attempts at purification have consistently been resisted. Three main strands or justifications for these movements can be identified. First are those who aim to stabilize the definition of terrorism so as to form the basis for a more scientific study of the topic. This first strand of purifiers generally emerged from the more academic corners of the field, aiming to stabilize "terrorism" by implementing a "neutral" or "depoliticized" definition. The problem for this first strand was understood as the intrusion of political definitions into what (they thought) ought to be an apolitical scientific arena. A second strand also viewed discussions of "terrorism" as polluted by politicized definitions, manipulated by the U.S. and other "Western" countries to further their geopolitical interests and draw attention away from their own uses of political violence. But rather than *removing* politics from the discourse, these critics either aimed to *redirect* "terrorism" as a term of approbation onto those they saw as the greater perpetrators of wrongdoing--that is, the U.S. and other "Western" states, rather than that of sub-state actors (Chomsky 1986; Herman 1982; Herman and O'Sullivan 1989)--while others sought to discredit the term altogether seeing it as irredeemably compromised (Hitchens 1986). The post 9/11 school of "critical terrorism studies" (as represented in this volume) can be seen in some ways as a successor to all of these efforts. What all of these projects share, however, is that they pick up upon, and attempt to resolve, in differing ways, existing tensions within the field.

Even though "terrorism studies" does not control or dominate production of discourse about terrorism in society at large, understanding the field and its emergence remains important for those who wish to understand the problem of "terrorism" and the discourse around it. First,

the emergence of a specialized arena itself devoted to the problem of "terrorism" is an important historical development, indicating the distinction of "terrorism" from other forms of violence as something specific and needing of separate inquiry. Second, to the extent to which "terrorism studies" has been able to establish itself as a legitimate arena, it can exert significant impact on the discourse throughout society (as I will discuss below, however, the extent to which this is the case is debatable). Third, even if terrorism studies does not *control* discourse, it is still a key site to look to if we wish to understand the larger terrorism discourse, because this is a locus where many of the key conflicts over what terrorism is and who may speak about it play out.

### **Lasting effects of the effects of the emergence of terrorism as an object of knowledge**

This history of how terrorism took shape as an object of knowledge has had significant effects on the production of experts and expertise about the subject. A first, and often unarticulated effect, is that the key question about violent incidents becomes "is this terrorism"? This encourages us to ask, after every incident, "is this terrorism", and the answer to that question to determine our subsequent response: thus, we can ask why the Boston marathon bombing was considered terrorism, but the Sandy Hook, Connecticut, school shootings were not. And while there is much discussion of *how* this question gets answered-- that is, whether or not this or that event *really* ought to be classified as terrorism, there is somewhat less consideration of the reason why *this* question is the one that frames the debate. Further, the framing of terrorism as an essentially unacceptable act, and of "terrorist" as an identity, have the effect of making these struggles proxies for debates over which acts and actors are acceptable and unacceptable, funnelling energies into debates over classification that could potentially be spent elsewhere.

Second, the framing of political violence as terrorism affects how we speak about violence, and who is authorized to speak. I have argued elsewhere (Stampnitzky 2013) that both expert and popular discourse on terrorism have come to be characterized by what I call a politics of "anti-knowledge"-- an active refusal of explanation itself, in which rational and scientific forms of explanation became opposed to a discourse of terrorism as caused by inexplicable evil. In the situation of anti-knowledge, knowing the terrorist is proscribed. It is as though the language of evil creates a "black box" around the terrorist, which creates its own explanation: terrorists commit terrorism because they are evil. And if terrorists are evil and irrational, then one cannot – and, indeed, *should not* – seek to know anything more about them. Like James Ferguson's (1994) concept of "*anti-politics*," the concept of anti-knowledge suggests that that a problem has been removed from the realm of (some types of) political debate. In this case, though, the mechanism is not the capture of a problem by experts professing technological solutions; in fact, it is quite the opposite, as the most frequent complaint of terrorism experts after 9/11 was that their views were marginalized and ignored.

As "terrorism" took shape as a way of understanding political violence, experts began to face increasing difficulty presenting themselves and their work as legitimate. In order to be a credible expert on terrorism, one must not get too close to actual terrorists, or to understanding their worldviews, lest one be deemed sympathetic, and thus tainted. In order to maintain their credibility and authority, experts needed to maintain a certain distance from their very object of expertise. Experts on terrorism who sought explanations for the attacks and highlighted the need to understand the motivations of terrorists were viewed with suspicion. Political scientist Martha Crenshaw recalled that "[p]eople [in the government] would feel mostly indignant, they would get upset when we said you have to understand the motivations of terrorists" (Easton 2001).



The paucity of studies based on firsthand contact with those labeled terrorists is a common critique of the field (Schmid 2011; Silke 2004). Brian Jenkins, one of the founders of the field, once compared terrorism analysts to Africa's Victorian cartographers :

Just as the cartographers a century ago mapped from a distance a vast and impenetrable continent few of them had ever seen, most contemporary terrorism research is conducted far removed from, and therefore with little direct knowledge of, the actual terrorists themselves. (quoted in Hoffman 2004:xviii).

In conclusion, as "terrorism" solidified as an object of expert knowledge, it did not become "purified" of its political or moral character; but rather, the expert discourse became more characterized by an intertwining of moral, political, and scientific/analytical concerns, leading to persistent difficulties for those who would treat political violence as an object of rational knowledge. It has been difficult for experts to carve out a position from which to produce expertise that is rational/apolitical/value-neutral, and even experts who seem to get to close to terrorists, may be tagged as "sympathetic," and thus lose their credibility. This history also has direct implications for the sorts of policies and practices that are enabled. If one thinks of one's enemies as rational actors with coherent goals, one may try to simply eliminate them, but one might also try to prevent violence in other ways, such as removing grievances, convincing them to change their goals, or altering incentives such that violence no longer seems like a fruitful way to achieve such goals. But the dominant logic of the war on terror has been to find and kill the "bad guys."

### **Conclusions and questions for further research**

As I noted in the opening to this chapter, some of the current points of contention about the emergence and development of the field are as follows: first, whether terrorism studies is institutionalizing, or becoming a "field" (e.g. Gordon 2010)<sup>4</sup>, and whether the meaning of "terrorism" will in fact stabilize, or whether it will remain an "essentially contested concept." Another live question is extent to which terrorism experts have autonomy from the state, and how this connects to the conditions under which the field emerged. Finally, we have the question of how and why various "taboos" in terrorism studies---from the study of "state terrorism" to first-hand research with those deemed "terrorists" originated and continue to structure the field. Additional areas that demand further investigation include the linkages, both past and future, between anti-terrorism knowledge, counterinsurgency, and colonialism. Research might look into earlier discourses on terrorism and political violence, for example, in Europe of the 1960s, in U.S. in the early twentieth century, and in the nineteenth century colonial context. A final area for research is the question of comparative analysis. Terrorism and terrorism expertise are both transnational phenomena. Are there distinctly national fields of expertise? And if so, how might the differing histories of political violence and terrorism in different countries have shaped the production of knowledge? All of these questions suggest the topic of the origins of "terrorism" is one still ripe for inquiry.

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<sup>4</sup> The status of "terrorism studies" is also itself a key site of contention for experts *within* the field: see, for example, the recent debate between Sageman and respondents in *Terrorism and Political Violence* (Sageman 2014).

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