



**NAVAL
POSTGRADUATE
SCHOOL**

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**TERRORISM PREVENTION THROUGH
COMMUNITY POLICING**

by

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March 2020

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington, DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE March 2020	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's thesis	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE TERRORISM PREVENTION THROUGH COMMUNITY POLICING			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) Robert Wyckoff				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A			10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE A	
13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words) Mass casualty, premeditated, and targeted violence incidents connected with extremism and hate are on the rise in the United States. The year 2019 saw more mass killings in the United States than ever recorded in one calendar year. Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) is the government-funded program that intended to mitigate these threats, but diverse community groups labeled CVE a discriminatory spying campaign, focused exclusively on Muslim community members. This thesis explores whether CVE might benefit from the integration of community policing strategies and, if so, what strategies from community policing would make future CVE programs more successful. Using an appreciative inquiry approach, this thesis evaluates CVE pilot programs, including current community policing models in Los Angeles and New York City. Recommendations include abandoning the phrase "countering violent extremism"; creating an all-inclusive, whole-community approach; empowering all front-line police officers to be problem solvers; cultivating citizen involvement in the design and structure of violence prevention programs; educating police officers on hate crimes, violent extremism, and the radicalization process; separating all community-focused violence programming from intelligence collection and criminal investigation teams; and gaining endorsements of such programs from executive-level law enforcement managers.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS terrorism, terrorism prevention, community policing, countering violent extremism, targeted violence, homeland security, hate crime, extremism, violence, policing			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 113	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU	

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TERRORISM PREVENTION THROUGH COMMUNITY POLICING

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Lieutenant, Denver Police Department
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES
(HOMELAND SECURITY AND DEFENSE)**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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ABSTRACT

Mass casualty, premeditated, and targeted violence incidents connected with extremism and hate are on the rise in the United States. The year 2019 saw more mass killings in the United States than ever recorded in one calendar year. Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) is the government-funded program that intended to mitigate these threats, but diverse community groups labeled CVE a discriminatory spying campaign, focused exclusively on Muslim community members. This thesis explores whether CVE might benefit from the integration of community policing strategies and, if so, what strategies from community policing would make future CVE programs more successful. Using an appreciative inquiry approach, this thesis evaluates CVE pilot programs, including current community policing models in Los Angeles and New York City. Recommendations include abandoning the phrase “countering violent extremism”; creating an all-inclusive, whole-community approach; empowering all front-line police officers to be problem solvers; cultivating citizen involvement in the design and structure of violence prevention programs; educating police officers on hate crimes, violent extremism, and the radicalization process; separating all community-focused violence programming from intelligence collection and criminal investigation teams; and gaining endorsements of such programs from executive-level law enforcement managers.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CLO	community liaison officer
C-POP	Community Police Officer on Patrol
CRC	Colorado Resilience Collaborative
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
LAPD	Los Angeles Police Department
NCO	neighborhood coordination officer
NYPD	New York City Police Department
SLO	senior lead officer
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mass casualty, pre-meditated, and targeted violence incidents connected with extremism and hate are on the rise in the United States. In 2019, there were 41 mass killings in the country, which is more than ever recorded in a single year.¹ 2018 was the fourth-deadliest year on record for domestic extremist-related murders in the United States.² 2017 also spelled trouble for American citizens, with bias-motivated hate crimes spiking 17 percent from 2016.³ The increase in 2017 was on the heels of a 37 percent jump from 2015 to 2016.⁴ The offenders are motivated primarily by anger and hate directed toward a specific race, religion, sexual orientation, ideology, or gang affiliation or outrage targeting co-workers, fellow students, and family members.⁵

In 2011, the U.S. government developed a program known as Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) to address the emerging threat of violence connected with hate-fueled ideologies. Since then, millions of government dollars have been awarded for CVE programs throughout the United States.⁶ The CVE effort was illegitimate in the eyes of many community groups and researchers across the country, resulting in mistrust, anger, resentment, and alienation of those citizens in the very communities the programs were meant to protect and strengthen.⁷

¹ Associated Press, “U.S. Mass Killings Hit New High in 2019, Most Were Shootings,” NBC News, December 24, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/u-s-mass-killings-hit-new-high-2019-most-were-n1106866>.

² Mark Pitcavage, *Murder and Extremism in the United States in 2018* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 2019), <https://www.adl.org/media/12480/download>.

³ “2017 Hate Crime Statistics Released,” Federal Bureau of Investigation, November 13, 2018, <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2017-hate-crime-statistics-released-111318>.

⁴ Madeline Masucci and Lynn Langton, *Hate Crime Victimization, 2004–2015*, NCJ 250653 (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 2017), <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/hcv0415.pdf>.

⁵ Masucci and Langton, *Hate Crime Victimization*; Associated Press, “U.S. Mass Killings Hit New High in 2019.”

⁶ “DHS Countering Violent Extremism Grants,” Department of Homeland Security, December 20, 2018, <https://www.dhs.gov/cvegrants>.

⁷ Faiza Patel and Meghan Koushik, *Countering Violent Extremism* (New York: Brennan Center for Justice, 2017), https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/Brennan%20Center%20CVE%20Report_0.pdf.

Current CVE practices have restricted the positive relationship building that community policing models achieve, and law enforcement has been slow to recognize the importance of properly unifying CVE and community policing in every community. Developing a framework at the local level that seeks to derail acts of violence through preventative efforts is something law enforcement should consider. This thesis served as the pathway to discover whether CVE can benefit from the integration of community policing strategies and, if so, how might CVE prosper when unified with community policing.

Law enforcement command personnel and homeland security professionals are responsible for building internal and external capacities to address a variety of issues related to crime and disorder, and the time has come for law enforcement to address premediated violence connected to extremism. This thesis explored local-level solutions that mitigate mass casualty, ideologically inspired violence. If CVE is the product the government wishes to endorse and apply at the community level to address premeditated violence, how might those programs benefit from the integration of community policing strategies?

An appreciative tone and approach were used to explore valuable strategies from community policing that could benefit CVE. This type of analysis values *all* creative contributions to the work space to determine a productive and effective path forward.⁸ It allows the organization to learn and develop new skills for future use while creating opportunities for positive growth.⁹ Research from Harvard University, the University of Chicago, and the Department of Justice provided the framework of the 2014 three-city

⁸ Frank Barrett and Ronald Fry, *Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Approach to Building Cooperative Capacity* (Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute Publications, 2008).

⁹ Barrett and Fry.

CVE pilot program effort.¹⁰ Open-source documents detailed the plan involving Boston, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis and the intentional focus on Muslim populations. A thorough inquiry into each program was necessary and relevant, as these programs set the tone for future CVE models. Opening the aperture on their deficiencies helped to extrapolate the effectiveness of CVE if merged with community policing concepts. The thesis also examined reports by the Brennan Center for Justice and the RAND Corporation, both well-respected, non-partisan policy institutions that have invested considerable resources to researching CVE tactics their practicality as a tool to reduce targeted violence. Both organizations advocated several forward-leaning public policy positions yet opposed each other in the CVE arena.¹¹

Most police agencies have relied on traditional tactics of investigation, surveillance, and arrest as the preferred counterterrorism technique to prevent mass casualty violence.¹² This thesis explored local-level terrorism prevention work happening in communities involving modern community policing strategies. The Los Angeles Police Department and New York City Police Department have embraced terrorism prevention and disrupted violence through community policing, in distinctive and dissimilar styles. A close analysis of their community policing and targeted violence systems shed light on the question of how police departments introduce and institutionalize CVE and terrorism prevention within the community policing model.

¹⁰ United States Attorney's Office, District of Minnesota, *Building Community Resilience* (Minneapolis: United States Attorney's Office, 2015), <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mn/building-community-resilience>; Elena Savoia et al., *S&T FRG Greater Boston CVE Pilot Program Project Report* (Boston: Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, 2018), <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/st-frg-greater-boston-cve-pilot-program-project-report>; Stevan Weine et al., *S&T Leveraging a Targeted Violence Prevention Program to Prevent Violent Extremism: A Formative Evaluation in Los Angeles* (Chicago: University of Illinois at Chicago, 2018), <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/st-leveraging-targeted-violence-prevention-program-prevent-violent-extremism-formative>.

¹¹ Brian A. Jackson et al., *Practical Terrorism Prevention: Reexamining U.S. National Approaches to Addressing the Threat of Ideologically Motivated Violence* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2019), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2647.html; Patel and Koushik, *Countering Violent Extremism*.

¹² David Schanzer et al., *The Challenge and Promise of Using Community Policing Strategies to Prevent Violent Extremism: A Call for Community Partnerships with Law Enforcement to Enhance Public Safety* (Durham, NC: Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security, January 2016), 87.

This thesis found that the benefits of community policing stretch beyond improved police–community relationships and trust building, indeed working toward the mitigation of targeted violence, hate crimes, and terrorism. It also identified the strategies most needed to unify community policing and CVE to create successful mass casualty prevention programming, including the kinds of internal and external changes essential for police departments to create successful CVE programs.

This thesis offered the following recommendations for integrating CVE with the community policing model:

1. Language Matters: Abandon the phrase “countering violent extremism” and adopt language that verifies and displays a whole-of-community, all-inclusive violence prevention approach.
2. Problem-Solving Approach: Empower all front-line police officers to be collaborative problem solvers, trained in community-level outreach and engagement. This should include communication-based training that emphasizes problem solving, helpful community resources, dispute mediation, and social interaction skills.
3. Cultivate Citizen Involvement: Involve community members and local organizations in violent-extremism program design, training, and application. Acknowledge diverse populations, including immigrant and refugees within the jurisdiction, and provide bias-motivated and hate-crime training to these groups.
4. Education and Awareness: Violent crimes and acts of terrorism occur locally, so community police officers need to be equipped with resources about terrorism awareness and suspicious activities. Hate-crime and violent-extremism awareness training for all front-line members of the police agency should be a priority.
5. Organizational Support: Commitment from top law enforcement leadership is a cornerstone of effective community policing

implementation. Prioritizing hate-crime and extremist-related violence prevention strategies as a primary public safety focus will ensure finite resources are aligned properly to mitigate the threat of hate crime and mass casualty violence. Doing so positively influences the perception of police within diverse community groups and builds trust between police and the groups who suffer from acts of hate.

These recommendations offer a path forward that promotes integration, transparency, and respect and opportunities between the police and communities that can mitigate mass casualty violence inspired by radicalization and hate-filled ideologies.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is my privilege to present this thesis and to pay my special regards and deepest gratitude to the individuals in my life who have made this journey possible. I would not have known about this incredible academic opportunity had it not been for my friends and colleagues, Dr. John Picarelli and Dr. Rik Legault. John and Rik, I owe you both profound appreciation for recommending and endorsing my participation in this program.

Denver Police Chief Robert C. White (retired), Denver Police Captain David Quinones, and current Denver Police Chief Paul M. Pazen, thank you for the long-term commitment and professional development opportunity of a lifetime.

Special recognition is in order for the team of homeland security professionals in Denver whom I have had the honor and good fortune of working with, each being genuinely committed to safeguarding our nation while building trusting relationships with the community around us. Jenny Presswalla, Joe Masztalics, Bob Troyer, Lindsey Shaw, Leslie Mongin, and Nadeen Ibrahim, thank you for exposing me to unique points of view, critical thinking, and creative problem solving. Your advice, expertise, and authentic friendship will not be forgotten.

It has been said that unexpected friendships are the best ones. I was completely unprepared for the impactful, quality relationships I would make with my NPS classmates. Some of the smartest individuals I have ever met were in the classroom, and over time, some of us developed friendships that I will forever treasure. Thank you, Patrick Mullane, Jay Ashraf, Timothy Heiser, Alana Tornello, Joseph Simons-Rudolph, Brittany Miller, Jay Hart, Kevin Haight, Brian Miller, Daniel Cunning, and Michael Sullivan; we walked into this together, in the face of destiny, and developed trusting, supportive, accepting, and reciprocal bonds. I will always be grateful. To my top-tier advisors, Dr. David Brannan and Dr. Mollie McGuire, thank you for the salient advice and sense of humor.

God has blessed me with a loving family who provides a circle of strength and hope in my life. This thesis is dedicated to my daughter Mackenzy and my son Matthew. Words cannot express the depth of my love for both of you. It is my dream that you live a life free

of fear and full of happiness. To my mother and father, my sister Rhonda, Sandy, and Chris, thank you for the unconditional encouragement. And finally, to my beautiful and selfless wife, Kim: You are my guiding light and beacon of hope, faithfully there for me until the very end. Thank you.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mass casualty, pre-meditated, and targeted violence incidents connected with extremism and hate are on the rise in the United States. There have been 41 mass killings in the United States in 2019, which is more than ever recorded in a one-year period.¹ 2018 was the fourth-deadliest year on record for domestic extremist-related murders in the United States.² In February 2018, Nikolas Cruz entered the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, and opened fire, killing 14 adolescents and three adults.³ Investigators later found that Cruz had adopted white-supremacist ideology and made remarks on a private Instagram account about his beliefs that “Jews [were] destroying the world” and he wished “all Jews were dead.”⁴ Then, self-described white supremacist Robert Bowers killed 11 worshipers and injured four police officers in an October 2018 shooting spree during faith services inside the Tree of Life Synagogue.⁵ Recently in Colorado—a state that has dealt with four deadly school shootings since the infamous Columbine attack in 1999—another deadly shooting left eight students injured and one dead.⁶ 2017 also spelled trouble for American citizens, with bias-motivated hate crimes spiking 17 percent from 2016.⁷ The increase in 2017 was on the heels of a 37 percent jump

¹ Associated Press, “U.S. Mass Killings Hit New High in 2019, Most Were Shootings,” NBC News, December 24, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/u-s-mass-killings-hit-new-high-2019-most-were-n1106866>.

² Mark Pitcavage, *Murder and Extremism in the United States in 2018* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 2019), <https://www.adl.org/media/12480/download>.

³ Elizabeth Chuck, Alex Johnson, and Corky Siemaszko, “‘Pure Evil’: 17 Killed in Mass Shooting at Florida High School,” NBC News, February 14, 2018, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/police-respond-shooting-parkland-florida-high-school-n848101>.

⁴ Pitcavage, *Murder and Extremism in the United States*.

⁵ Julie Turkewitz and Kevin Roose, “Who Is Robert Bowers, the Suspect in the Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting?,” *New York Times*, October 28, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/27/us/robert-bowers-pittsburgh-synagogue-shooter.html>.

⁶ Elisha Fieldstadt, “Suspected Colorado STEM Shooter Joked about School Shootings, Students Say,” NBC News, May 10, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/suspected-colorado-stem-shooter-was-bully-made-jokes-about-school-n1004181>.

⁷ “2017 Hate Crime Statistics Released,” Federal Bureau of Investigation, November 13, 2018, <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2017-hate-crime-statistics-released-111318>.

from 2015 to 2016.⁸ The offenders are motivated primarily by anger and hate directed toward a specific race, religion, sexual orientation, ideology, or gang affiliation or outrage targeting co-workers, fellow students, and family members.⁹

In 2011, the U.S. government, under the purview of the Department of Homeland Security and at the direction of the Obama administration, developed a program known as Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) to address the emerging threat of violence connected with hate-fueled ideologies. Since then, millions of government dollars have been awarded for CVE programs throughout the United States.¹⁰ The CVE effort was illegitimate in the eyes of many community groups and researchers across the country, resulting in mistrust, anger, resentment, and alienation of those citizens in the very communities the programs were meant to protect and strengthen.¹¹ Criticism, worry, and frustration about CVE came from prominent imams and civil rights advocates in the identified cities, elevating the level of fear and suspicion of local law enforcement.¹²

Future efforts in CVE need to reassess previous models if they wish to implement a successful program. One approach to CVE models is the integration of community policing. Community policing strategies aim to build a positive relationship with the community so that all feel included, valued, and involved in community decision making. The integration of community policing strategies may add value to CVE programs, as the main failure of previous CVE efforts is the primary goal in community policing: building

⁸ Madeline Masucci and Lynn Langton, *Hate Crime Victimization, 2004–2015*, NCJ 250653 (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 2017), <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/hcv0415.pdf>.

⁹ Masucci and Langton, *Hate Crime Victimization*; Associated Press, “U.S. Mass Killings Hit New High in 2019.

¹⁰ “DHS Countering Violent Extremism Grants,” Department of Homeland Security, December 20, 2018, <https://www.dhs.gov/cvegrants>.

¹¹ Faiza Patel and Meghan Koushik, *Countering Violent Extremism* (New York: Brennan Center for Justice, 2017), https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/Brennan%20Center%20CVE%20Report_0.pdf.

¹² Bryan Bender, “Islamic Leader Says US Officials Unfairly Target Muslims,” *Boston Globe*, February 9, 2015, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/nation/2015/02/18/islamic-leader-boston-says-justice-department-effort-identify-homegrown-terrorists-unfairly-targeting-muslim-community/uqzG0M3czJeuVH8HhSDtRN/story.html>; Rosa Nguyen, “Civil Rights Groups Protest Federal Program to Combat Extremism, Saying It Targets Muslims,” *Boston Globe*, August 6, 2015, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2015/08/06/civil-rights-groups-protest-federal-program-combat-extremism-saying-targets-muslims/XefStmtvTuJAyBr8Z8XWLJ/story.html>.

trusting relationships between police and community through collaborative interactions designed to reduce fear and prevent crime.¹³ The inherent success of community policing programs can be attributed, in large part, to community input and direct involvement with crime prevention matters. The integration of community into crime prevention allows the community to feel a sense of ownership in the rule of law while creating solutions and strategies that make neighborhoods safe.¹⁴ Current CVE practices have restricted the positive relationship-building that community policing models achieve, and law enforcement has been slow to recognize the importance of properly unifying CVE and community policing in every community. It is unclear exactly how local law enforcement agencies perceive the threat of violent extremism within the communities they serve and the extent to which they recognize the significant challenge of confronting extremism as part of the law enforcement mission. Developing a framework at the local level that seeks to derail acts of violence through preventative efforts is something law enforcement should consider. This thesis serves as the pathway to uncover whether CVE can benefit from the integration of community policing strategies and, if so, how might CVE prosper when unified with community policing.

A. RESEARCH QUESTION

Law enforcement command personnel and homeland security professionals are responsible for building internal and external capacities to address a variety of issues related to crime and disorder, and the time has come for law enforcement to address premeditated violence connected to extremism. Street-level police officers should be addressing all forms of premeditated violence, and law enforcement should be aware of the existing specialized methods that disrupt the process of radicalization. This thesis will explore local-level solutions that mitigate mass casualty, ideologically inspired violence. If the government wishes to endorse and apply CVE at the community level to address

¹³ Kyle Peyton, Michael Sierra-Arevalo, and David Rand, “Community Policing and Police Legitimacy,” Yale Law School, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://law.yale.edu/centers-workshops/justice-collaboratory/projects/community-policing-and-police-legitimacy>.

¹⁴ Jack R. Greene, “Community Policing in America: Changing the Nature, Structure, and Function of the Police,” *Criminal Justice* 3 (2000), https://www.ncjrs.gov/criminal_justice2000/vol_3/03g.pdf.

premeditated violence, how might those programs benefit from the integration of community policing strategies? This thesis answers the following questions:

1. What strategies from community policing would be beneficial in making CVE programs successful?
2. If CVE programs are implemented at the local police level, what kind of internal and external changes need to be made to create a successful CVE program?

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

All communities are susceptible to mass casualty violence and extremist activity, and the threat of radicalization is prevalent within every jurisdiction.¹⁵ The response from the U.S. government to counter the rise of violent extremism and targeted violence was a comprehensive national strategy and local-level programming, tested in 2014 during a three-city CVE pilot program.¹⁶ Detailed reports from the Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health have each explored and evaluated the three-city CVE pilot program and generated crucial information for CVE practitioners who create plans for community-level violence prevention.¹⁷ However, limited literature has explored how best to unify CVE and community policing and the necessary strategies and changes required by law enforcement agencies when implementing CVE at the local level.

¹⁵ Allison G. Smith, *How Radicalization to Terrorism Occurs in the United States: What Research Sponsored by the National Institute of Justice Tells Us* (Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, 2018), <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/250171.pdf>.

¹⁶ Barack Obama, *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States* (Washington, DC: White House, 2011), <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/empowering-local-partners-prevent-violent-extremism-united-states>.

¹⁷ United States Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts, *A Framework for Prevention and Intervention Strategies: Incorporating Violent Extremism into Violence Prevention Efforts* (Boston: United States Attorney's Office, 2015), https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Boston%20Framework_1.pdf; Stevan Weine et al., *S&T Leveraging a Targeted Violence Prevention Program to Prevent Violent Extremism: A Formative Evaluation in Los Angeles* (Chicago: University of Illinois at Chicago, 2018), <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/st-leveraging-targeted-violence-prevention-program-prevent-violent-extremism-formative>; Elena Savoia et al., *S&T FRG Greater Boston CVE Pilot Program Project Report* (Boston: Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, 2018), <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/st-frg-greater-boston-cve-pilot-program-project-report>.

Available research indicates that law enforcement agencies are faced with difficult challenges in operationalizing CVE programs and linking CVE to a community policing framework, which has been a primary deficiency among participating agencies.¹⁸

This literature review examines and discusses key sources and credible scholars who establish a solid footing for a better understanding of the research that explores two primary areas of concern: (1) countering violent extremism programs, techniques, and strategies; and (2) using community policing as a means for implementing CVE while building trust in diverse communities.

1. Countering Violent Extremism: A Suspicious Government Effort

According to extensive research and academic insight from the Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law, CVE is a government strategy that was doomed from the beginning due to a variety of factors, with a lack of community input as a primary concern.¹⁹ Two leading Brennan researchers, Faiza Patel and Meghan Koushik, have found that CVE is a targeted effort, focused exclusively on the Muslim community and Islamic religion.²⁰ They further claim that CVE is a product that has been sold as community-led intervention programming, but in practice, most efforts have been led by law enforcement agencies under the primary direction and control of the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security.²¹ With a lack of community buy-in and participation, the perception within diverse communities is that CVE is a thinly veiled community partnership program with a hidden agenda. The federally funded project has been interpreted as a Muslim surveillance technique, designed to persuade citizens that Islam serves as a “religious conveyor belt” that, if left unchecked, leads to acts of terrorism.²²

¹⁸ David Schanzer et al., *The Challenge and Promise of Using Community Policing Strategies to Prevent Violent Extremism: A Call for Community Partnerships with Law Enforcement to Enhance Public Safety* (Durham, NC: Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security, January 2016).

¹⁹ Patel and Koushik, *Countering Violent Extremism*.

²⁰ Patel and Koushik.

²¹ Patel and Koushik.

²² Faiza Patel, “Countering Violent Extremism: Myths and Facts,” fact sheet (New York: Brennan Center for Justice, November 2, 2015), <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/countering-violent-extremism-myths-and-facts>.

Devoid of community input and collaboration, CVE efforts are primed for civil rights and civil liberty violations, with no indication from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)'s agency lawyers that proper assessments and evaluations are taking place to ensure that individuals' constitutional rights are upheld.²³ Enhancing public safety is a complicated process that requires partnerships between the community and police. Leaving the public out of the design process has created an overarching atmosphere of ambiguity, confusion, and mistrust.²⁴

The Brennan Center's research underscores the ways in which community involvement, participation, and buy-in are key to establishing and implementing any law enforcement program, especially those related to CVE. Policing efforts, including strategic programs that may be controversial, rarely survive without community input. This thesis seeks to explore the community policing framework and reveal whether elements of modern-day community policing approaches hold promise for smart CVE programming in American law enforcement agencies.

2. Countering Violent Extremism: A Sensible Government Effort

Analyses and policy reviews that substantiate the value of CVE programs come from many respectable sources, each validating the need for law enforcement to establish lines of communication and build trust in all communities, especially diverse populations. The RAND Corporation, known for contributing policy and meaningful national and international research, has studied programs, published literature, and assessed case studies of the Department of Homeland Security and its local partners. A recent 2018 study from RAND, *Practical Terrorism Prevention*, was assembled by researchers with specialized expertise in terrorism prevention policy and examines the current status of CVE programs.²⁵ Its findings reveal the importance of synthesizing police activities with

²³ Patel and Koushik, *Countering Violent Extremism*.

²⁴ Amanda Sperber, "Somalis in Minnesota Question Counter-Extremism Program Targeted at Muslims," *Guardian*, September 14, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/sep/14/somali-muslims-minnesota-counter-extremism-program>.

²⁵ Brian A. Jackson et al., *Practical Terrorism Prevention: Reexamining U.S. National Approaches to Addressing the Threat of Ideologically Motivated Violence* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2019), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2647.html.

community input while developing and involving non-governmental organizations and CVE practitioners from the state and local level.²⁶ Progress has been made in the CVE field when partnerships are valued and dedicated teams work together.²⁷ The study also highlights the goal of effective CVE policy, characterized as community-driven intervention programs and strategies that aim to reduce the threat of localized acts of terrorism.²⁸ The approach is uncommon and represents a shift from traditional criminal investigative methods of surveillance, arrest, and prosecution. An example is the work being done in Minneapolis and Colorado, where local-level community teams are steering adolescents away from negative influences and potential recruitment for political extremism.²⁹ This includes efforts to increase community awareness and education, as well as collaboration with community stakeholders and local law enforcement.

Another important area of consideration that requires focus and attention when evaluating the significance of CVE work is the importance of violence prevention, which is based largely on existing public health models. The Center for Security Studies at Georgetown University produced a study evaluating a multi-disciplinary public health approach, outlining a system that shows promise when combined with CVE.³⁰ Models that take this approach attempt to stop the spread of violence by focusing on the population that has already experienced it, as victims or perpetrators, and offer resources and outreach aimed at future disruptions. This 2016 study highlights the power of collaboration when local governments choose to work alongside public stakeholders during the application of

²⁶ Jackson et al.

²⁷ Los Angeles Interagency Coordination Group, *The Los Angeles Framework for Countering Violent Extremism* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Interagency Coordination Group, 2015), <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/usao-cdca/legacy/2015/05/18/MayUpdatedLAFrameworkforCounteringViolentExtremism.pdf>.

²⁸ Jackson et al., *Practical Terrorism Prevention*.

²⁹ Peter Bergen and Melissa Salyk-Virk, "An Alternative Approach to Preventing Extremist Violence," *Pacific Standard*, March 7, 2019, <https://psmag.com/social-justice/a-community-approach-to-preventing-extremism>.

³⁰ Josefi Reda, *Countering Violent Extremism: Applying the Public Health Model* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University, 2018), <http://www.dmefforpeace.org/peaceexchange/countering-violent-extremism-applying-the-public-health-model/>.

prevention strategies.³¹ Public health resiliency systems encourage community collaboration and engagement, which the Georgetown study presents as a valid approach for violence prevention and a serious consideration for CVE practitioners. The Los Angeles Police Department’s CVE pilot program has utilized public health prevention strategies and focused heavily on community engagement in designing CVE prevention plans.³² Its evaluation has revealed that new violence prevention programs might have difficulty meeting the needs of the community whereas existing, community-based service providers are best suited for prevention. The study found that a promising path forward is to enhance current mental health and public health systems by including violent extremism prevention efforts, e.g., outreach, public education efforts, and social media campaigns that bring public awareness to the issue.³³

3. The Value of Modern-Day Community Policing

The power of positive relationships between the police and community cannot be overstated and is evident in a multitude of studies, news clippings, and social media feeds. From a law enforcement perspective, the Department of Justice’s Community Oriented Police Services and the Police Executive Research Forum are primarily interested in advancing and supporting the practice of community policing and have contributed considerable research, funding, and executive-level publications to support the time-tested strategy of police and community working in tandem to solve crime and disorder problems.³⁴ The Community Oriented Police Services office—the formal arm of the Department of Justice responsible for community policing programs—has demonstrated

³¹ Reda.

³² Los Angeles Interagency Coordination Group, *Framework for Countering Violent Extremism*.

³³ Weine et al., *Leveraging a Targeted Violence Prevention Program*.

³⁴ Police Executive Research Forum, *Advice from Police Chiefs and Community Leaders on Building Trust: “Ask for Help, Work Together, and Show Respect”* (Washington, DC: Police Executive Research Forum, 2016), <https://www.policeforum.org/assets/policecommunitytrust.pdf>.

its commitment to collaborative police–community efforts by investing nearly \$14 billion toward such projects.³⁵

The benefits of community policing stretch beyond improved police–community relationships and trust building. According to a study conducted by Dennis Rosenbaum, criminologist and law professor at the University of Chicago and respected author, fear of crime, illegal drug availability, and levels of victimization decrease when community policing strategies are linked to the policing model.³⁶ The rise of hate crime and the incidents of violent extremism on American soil are challenges for which every city needs to prepare, and unifying CVE and community policing may be the answer.³⁷

C. RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Countering Violent Extremism

CVE programs are an important aspect of national security in developed nations around the world, including the United States, as demonstrated by official national security strategies.³⁸ For the purpose of this thesis, a comparative methodology is the preferred approach to analyze the U.S. CVE work in the 2014 three-city pilot plan. Research from Harvard University, the University of Chicago, and the Department of Justice provide the framework for the three-city CVE pilot program effort.³⁹ Open-source documents detail

³⁵ Department of Justice, “Attorney General Sessions Announces \$98 Million to Hire Community Policing Officers,” press release (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, November 20, 2017), <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/attorney-general-sessions-announces-98-million-hire-community-policing-officers>.

³⁶ Dennis P. Rosenbaum, *The Challenge of Community Policing* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 1994), <http://sk.sagepub.com/books/the-challenge-of-community-policing>.

³⁷ Federal Bureau of Investigation, “2017 Hate Crime Statistics Released.”

³⁸ Secretary of State for the Home Department, *CONTEST: The United Kingdom’s Strategy for Countering Terrorism* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 2018), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS02189297_98-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf; Donald J. Trump, *National Security Strategy for the United States of America* (Washington, DC: White House, 2017), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905-2.pdf>.

³⁹ United States Attorney’s Office, District of Minnesota, *Building Community Resilience* (Minneapolis: United States Attorney’s Office, 2015), <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mn/building-community-resilience>; Savoia et al., *Greater Boston CVE Pilot Program*; Weine et al., *Leveraging a Targeted Violence Prevention Program*.

the three-city CVE pilot plan involving Boston, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis and the intentional focus on Muslim populations. A thorough inquiry into each program is necessary and relevant, as these programs set the tone for future CVE models. One of the biggest criticisms of CVE from community members and scholars is the fear, distrust, and suspicion of current and future CVE law enforcement efforts. Evaluating the documents surrounding this pilot plan provides insight into the degree to which community policing values, strategies, and systems had been conceptualized and implemented during the CVE design process. This analysis opens the aperture on potential deficiencies and provides an opportunity to determine whether CVE merged with community policing concepts. If CVE had been built upon a community policing platform, would it have diminished the public's negative identification of CVE programs?

The Brennan Center for Justice and RAND, both well-respected, non-partisan policy institutions, have dedicated considerable resources and research efforts toward CVE tactics and their practicality as a tool to reduce targeted violence. Both organizations advocate several forward-leaning public policy positions yet oppose each other in the CVE arena.⁴⁰ RAND identifies CVE as a useful and practical terrorism prevention method while the Brennan Center labels the tactic as unreliable and wrought with civil rights abuses. This thesis examines the reports and special publications from these institutions and rigorously evaluates options for law enforcement policymakers to consider.

2. Community Policing and Terrorism Prevention

Research has revealed that law enforcement programs are inherently successful when they include community input and collaboration.⁴¹ Generally speaking, security and crime-fighting strategies at the local level in the United States are accomplished by what is referred to as *community policing*. In the law enforcement community, there is no one preferred method or system to accomplish community policing, and every community has

⁴⁰ Jackson et al., *Practical Terrorism Prevention*; Patel and Koushik, *Countering Violent Extremism*.

⁴¹ Police Executive Research Forum, *Community Policing: The Past, Present and Future* (Washington, DC: Police Executive Research Forum, 2004), https://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Free_Online_Documents/Community_Policing/community%20policing%20-%20the%20past%20present%20and%20future%202004.pdf.

different needs and expectations for its police.⁴² American communities demand professional law enforcement services and are generally satisfied with local law enforcement services and community policing practices; however, with little officer training and miniscule community awareness of extremist ideologies, most agencies are vulnerable and ill prepared to prevent ideologically inspired, mass casualty violence.⁴³ Of the more than 18,000 law enforcement agencies in the United States, only 19 cities have violent extremism programming at the local level (see Figure 1).⁴⁴

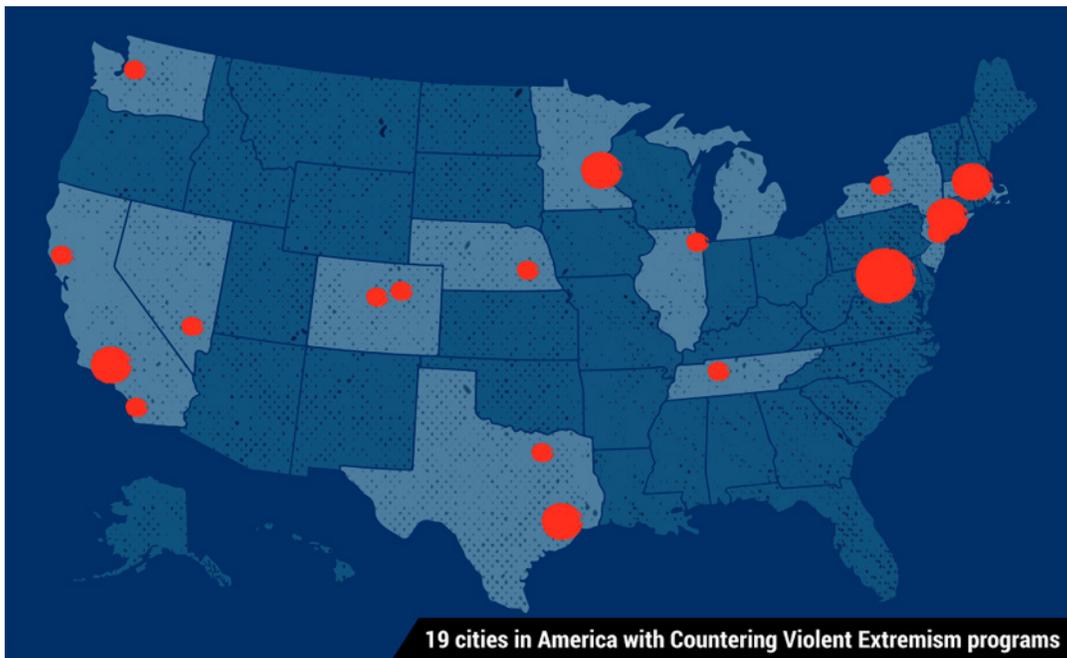


Figure 1. The 19 CVE Programs in the United States⁴⁵

⁴² Greene, “Community Policing in America.”

⁴³ Emily Ekins, “Policing in America: Understanding Public Attitudes toward the Police. Results from a National Survey,” Cato Institute, December 7, 2016, <https://www.cato.org/survey-reports/policing-america>.

⁴⁴ Faiza Patel, Andrew Lindsay, and Sophia DenUyl, “Countering Violent Extremism in the Trump Era,” Brennan Center for Justice, June 15, 2018, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/countering-violent-extremism-trump-era>.

⁴⁵ Source: Patel, Lindsay, and DenUyl.

Most police agencies rely on the traditional tactics of investigation, surveillance, and arrest as the preferred counterterrorism technique to prevent mass casualty violence.⁴⁶ This thesis looks toward terrorism prevention work happening in the community. The Los Angeles Police Department and New York City Police Department are leading law enforcement agencies that embrace targeted violence prevention through community policing, in distinctive and dissimilar styles. A close analysis of their community policing and targeted violence systems sheds light on the question of how police departments introduce and institutionalize CVE and targeted violence prevention within the community policing model. A comprehensive literature review regarding community policing strategies generally demonstrates a synergy between the police and community members when they work together toward safer communities. Not readily apparent, however, are the specific internal and external modifications of the community policing model when introducing and institutionalizing CVE. The comparative research model helps to answer these questions and provide an opportunity to identify (1) the strategies most needed to create CVE programs within the community and (2) what kind of internal and external changes are needed by local police to develop successful CVE programs.

3. Community-Led Programs

Exciting violence prevention work is being done in Oakland, California, and Denver, Colorado, using multi-sector, community-led programs, designed to bring community stakeholders together to address social grievances that might lead to violent extremism. Law enforcement leaders have the powerful ability to attract outside resources that apply local-level expertise and bolster safety mechanisms within the community.⁴⁷ For example, the Denver Police Department and the University of Denver are authoritative organizations that work together to prevent targeted violence.⁴⁸ An analysis of open-source documents about agency leaders that unify police and community through policy and

⁴⁶ Schanzer et al., *The Challenge and Promise of Using Community Policing*.

⁴⁷ Reda, *Countering Violent Extremism*.

⁴⁸ "Colorado Resilience Collaborative," University of Denver, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www.du.edu/gsp/resilience-collaborative/partnerships/index.html>.

partnerships helps to identify common organizational themes, shape the policy recommendations of this thesis, and provide a vision for the future.

An appreciative tone and approach are used throughout this thesis, providing the opportunity to study various smart practices with a positive slant toward valuable strategies from community policing that could benefit CVE. This type of analysis values *all* creative contributions to the work space to determine a productive and effective path forward.⁴⁹ It allows the organization to learn and develop new skills for future use while creating opportunities for positive growth.⁵⁰ Police agencies that work toward fostering safer communities with unprecedented and unique programming are vulnerable to criticism and disapproval. Appreciative inquiry analysis brings positive attention to a space of work that has already been accomplished with an eye toward future improvement.⁵¹

D. CHAPTER OUTLINE

The following chapters expose the complications with CVE, decipher solutions, and make clear the need for the fusion of community policing and CVE as the antidote for localized acts of violent extremism and mass casualty events. Chapter II examines the seriousness of the violent extremism threat to local communities in the United States, identifying motivating factors that drive an individual toward radicalization and violence, the traditional responses from U.S. law enforcement, and the need for community solutions. Chapter III analyzes the introductory CVE programs in the United States and their incapacitating influence on minority groups, civil rights organizations, and the police departments aiming to provide safety and peace of mind to the community. Chapter IV breaks down the primary obstacles of CVE, setting the stage for compelling violence prevention considerations for law enforcement leaders and homeland security professionals. Chapter V looks toward the new era of community policing taking place in New York and Los Angeles, which have empowered front-line patrol officers to be

⁴⁹ Frank Barrett and Ronald Fry, *Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Approach to Building Cooperative Capacity* (Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute Publications, 2008).

⁵⁰ Barrett and Fry.

⁵¹ Barrett and Fry.

community problem-solvers with an eye to terrorism prevention awareness. Chapter VI recognizes two promising violence and extremism prevention programs happening in Colorado and California, which entrust community leaders to take charge in the prevention arena. Chapter VII answers the research question and provides a roadmap for law enforcement leaders with distinct propositions that unify communities and law enforcement toward a common goal of disrupting mass casualty violence inspired by radicalization and hate-filled ideologies.

II. EXTREMISM IN THE UNITED STATES: A THREAT TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Understanding the challenges and threats that lie ahead allows law enforcement officials and homeland security practitioners to design training, tactics, and policy that prepare their agency. Understanding the operational conditions, circumstances, and surroundings of the community, and the environment around the community, are crucial when determining what strategies and resources are needed to withstand the threat of violent extremism and targeted violence. Every community in the United States is susceptible to extremist beliefs and activities, the threat of radicalization, and the possibility of mass casualty violence.⁵² Having a grasp of the meaning of extremism aids in the process, but the term is difficult to understand due to its broad interpretations, the fear it introduces into communities, and the stigma it applies to the individual.⁵³ Premeditated, mass casualty violence that is motivated by extremism is the emerging threat of our time, requiring preparation and high-level consideration from law enforcement managers and homeland security professionals. This chapter sheds light on the struggle in defining extremism and the difficulty in addressing the problem without community assistance.

A. UNDERSTANDING THE THREAT

In today's environment, communities expect government officials and homeland security professionals to have systems in place that inhibit, intervene, and interrupt targeted violence. American CVE is the government-funded method to accomplish these goals—though, unfortunately, law enforcement cannot do it alone.

⁵² Smith, *How Radicalization to Terrorism Occurs in the United States*.

⁵³ J. M. Berger, *Extremism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018), <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/extremism>.

1. What Is Violent Extremism?

According to research, 2019 was the deadliest year on record for targeted, hate-filled, mass casualty violence in the United States.⁵⁴ There is growing concern among Americans that gun violence, much of which is motivated and inspired by hate and ideology, is a national security threat.⁵⁵ The following is a list of several examples of large-scale mass casualty events that occurred in 2019:

- February 15, Aurora, Illinois: Disgruntled industrial warehouse employee, deadly shooting, five dead, five police officers shot
- May 31, Virginia Beach, Virginia: Enraged city employee, shooting, 12 dead
- July 28, Gilroy, California: Extremist mass shooting at the Garlic Festival, three dead
- August 3, El Paso, Texas: Extremist mass shooting at a Walmart, 20 dead
- August 4, Dayton, Ohio: Outdoor entertainment district, extremist mass shooting, nine dead
- August 31, Odessa, Texas: Disgruntled industrial employee, eight dead
- November 14, Santa Clarita, California: High school shooting, three dead
- December 4, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii: U.S. Navy sailor, shooting spree, three dead
- December 6, Pensacola, Florida, Naval Air Station: Extremist Saudi pilot suspect, four dead
- December 10, Jersey City, New Jersey: Extremist Black Hebrew Israelite suspects, four dead including a Jersey City police officer⁵⁶

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines violent extremism as “violence committed in the name of an ideology to further a political, religious, ideological,

⁵⁴ Associated Press, “U.S. Mass Killings Hit New High in 2019.”

⁵⁵ John R. Allen, “Gun Violence in America: A True National Security Threat,” *Brookings* (blog), August 5, 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brookings-now/2019/08/05/gun-violence-in-america-a-true-national-security-threat/>.

⁵⁶ “Mass Shootings in 2019,” Gun Violence Archive, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/reports/mass-shooting?year=2019>.

economic, or social agenda.”⁵⁷ Extremist-related acts of terrorism are viewed as the critical challenge of our time.⁵⁸ Consequently, misunderstanding or misinterpreting the problem has catastrophic consequences for police and homeland security personnel. In 2018, there were more than 9,500 extremist-related terrorist attacks around the world, killing a total of nearly 23,000 people.⁵⁹ While attacks around the world have slowly declined, extremist-related violence in the United States has persisted and shown a steady increase over time, with 67 acts of terrorism on U.S. soil, the most reported since 1982.⁶⁰ Extremism is widely discussed by homeland security professionals and closely scrutinized by scholars, but the challenge for police is *recognizing* extremism before a deadly incident occurs and understanding how it presents itself within the community before an attack. Police officers need to be proactive with extremist and targeted violence, looking for indicators and identifying solutions before attacks take place. Despite the various forms and styles of policing, it really boils down to two choices for American police officers: proactive and reactive. Proactive policing and violent extremism, however, are not commonly associated.

A second barrier to law enforcement’s response to violent extremism is the government’s plan to mitigate and disrupt the violence: CVE.⁶¹ Some of this problem stems from the phrase itself—countering violent extremism—and the lack of a clear understanding about when something is considered *extreme*. What exactly constitutes extreme political, social, or religious thought, and who or what makes that determination in a free society? According to the Department of Homeland Security, countering violent extremism “refers to proactive actions to counter efforts by extremists to recruit, radicalize,

⁵⁷ “What Is Violent Extremism?,” Federal Bureau of Investigation, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www.fbi.gov/cve508/teen-website/what-is-violent-extremism>.

⁵⁸ Berger, *Extremism*.

⁵⁹ Jessica Rivinius, “Global Terrorism Decreases in 2018 as Recent Uptick in U.S. Terrorist Attacks Was Sustained,” National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and the Response to Terrorism, October 8, 2019, <https://www.start.umd.edu/news/global-terrorism-decreases-2018-recent-uptick-us-terrorist-attacks-was-sustained>.

⁶⁰ Rivinius.

⁶¹ Robert L. McKenzie, “Countering Violent Extremism in America: Policy Recommendations for the Next President,” Brookings Institute, October 18, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/countering-violent-extremism-in-america-policy-recommendations-for-the-next-president/>.

and mobilize followers to violence.”⁶² Civil rights organizations and civil liberty scholars have raised concerns about whether CVE strategies restrict certain religious beliefs and ideologies while also targeting the Muslim-American community.⁶³ The constitutional protections of free speech, freedom of thought, and freedom of association are some of the most important liberties that U.S. citizens enjoy but citizens of other countries might not be promised. As such, the emphasis for law enforcement should be on violence prevention rather than ideology. This imprecise interpretation of extremism introduces ambiguity not only for community members but for law enforcement as well, raising questions about the legal options available for an individual charged with a crime motivated by extremist ideology.⁶⁴ Police agencies may not have a grasp on CVE, but one thing remains clear: Americans are concerned about mass shootings happening in their own communities while simultaneously exhibiting skepticism and disagreement over what constitutes extremism.⁶⁵

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines extremism as “the tendency to be extreme and . . . the views or actions of extremists; Radicalism.”⁶⁶ The problem with this definition is its skirted implications, assuming the intended audience already understands the principles and elements of the meaning. Analogous to pornography, extremism and radicalization are easy to identify when observed but very difficult to define.⁶⁷ The danger of ideological extremism is that it can provide a social connection that merges individuals with other extremists, potential radicalization, and ultimately, violence.⁶⁸

⁶² “What Is CVE?,” Department of Homeland Security, January 19, 2017, <https://www.dhs.gov/cve/what-is-cve>.

⁶³ Nguyen, “Civil Rights Groups Protest Federal Program.”

⁶⁴ Brian Pascus, “What Is ‘Domestic Terrorism’ and What Can the Law Do about It?,” CBS News, August 19, 2019, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/what-is-domestic-terrorism-understanding-law-and-fbi-definitions-terrorist-activity-in-the-united-states/>.

⁶⁵ Gary Langer, “6 in 10 Fear a Mass Shooting; Most Think Gun Laws Can Help: Poll,” ABC News, September 9, 2019, <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/10-fear-mass-shooting-gun-laws-poll/story?id=65414785>.

⁶⁶ *Oxford English Dictionary*, c.v. “extremism,” accessed October 10, 2019, <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/67172>.

⁶⁷ Berger, *Extremism*.

⁶⁸ Berger.

2. The Path to Violence Is Paved with Grievances

American law enforcement, at the local level, must first recognize and understand what motivates an individual toward extremism and acts of violence. It is the responsibility of those who design crime prevention strategies and community policing models to acknowledge the threat of extremism. Nearly all individuals in documented incidents of extremist violence exhibit personal motivators that inspired the targeted violence attack, though no one pathway or course of action exists.⁶⁹ A better approach might be grievance-based. Many of the mass casualty events in 2019 were motivated by a perceived grievance connected to work, school, personal relationships, or finances in the aggressor's life.⁷⁰

So, what motivates a person to adhere to an ideology or social condition to the extent that killing is the only option left? A useful method for learning and understanding the elements of extremist individuals is through a methodology known as social identity theory. Established by social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner, social identity theory defines a person's identity through in-group and out-group dynamics.⁷¹ Social environments are powerful and motivating, influencing the behaviors, beliefs, and "normal" behaviors of the individuals in the group. Rituals, customs, and procedures during police academy training, Navy SEAL training, and even firefighter training showcase the compelling and dynamic influence one group of humans can have over another group. Through physical exertion, individuals are motivated by social grouping, individuality, identity, and the human need for acceptance and legitimacy within the group.⁷² This certainly applies to extremists, those in need of acceptance, enraged with a political or social situation, and inspired by like-minded individuals around them.⁷³ In-group and out-group classifications are commanding and influence the direction of an individual's life, as

⁶⁹ Smith, *How Radicalization to Terrorism Occurs in the United States*.

⁷⁰ National Council for Behavioral Health, *Mass Violence in America: Causes, Impacts, and Solutions* (Washington, DC: National Council for Behavioral Health, August 2019), https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Mass-Violence-in-America_8-6-19.pdf.

⁷¹ Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner, *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁷² Tajfel and Turner.

⁷³ Berger, *Extremism*.

it is centered around the extent to which an individual feels a sense of belonging and membership in the mainstream group. Terrorists, like all individuals, are influenced by the societal groups and influences around them, which is problematic because a likely solution is violence.⁷⁴ This plays out again and again in the aftermath of mass casualty events when investigators learn that radicalization of the suspect involved close-knit, insular groups and frequent online interactions in chat rooms and social media postings, with others pouring fuel on the ideological fire.⁷⁵

To better explain the path that leads one toward a mass casualty event, Fathali Moghaddam of Georgetown University paints a metaphorical image of a staircase that leads to an act of terrorism at the top of a building.⁷⁶ The staircase becomes increasingly higher and narrower, and along the way, several doors are open and lead to different rooms. Each door represents an opportunity to off-ramp, averting violence and offering a potential solution to the perceived grievance. Moghaddam asserts that most people take advantage of the alternative solutions provided to them, accept assistance, and stop climbing, though people who reach the second floor and keep climbing are those vulnerable to peer influence.⁷⁷ This is the point at which the person begins to develop an understanding of the out-group and the existence of an “enemy.” The higher the individual climbs, the more he begins to see the world as “us-versus-them” and, in doing so, accepts terrorism as a justifiable act that must occur (see Figure 2).⁷⁸ Moghaddam also asserts that policy options and societal incentives must be available at the foundation of the staircase to avert the escalation toward an act of terrorism.⁷⁹ Many perpetrators of mass casualty attacks in the

⁷⁴ David Brannan, Anders Strindberg, and Kristin Darken, *A Practitioner’s Way Forward: Terrorism Analysis* (Salinas, CA: Agile Press, 2014).

⁷⁵ Casey Tolan, “James Hodgkinson Expressed Hate for Republicans Online,” *Mercury News*, June 14, 2017, <https://www.mercurynews.com/2017/06/14/james-hodgkinson-shooting-facebook-republicans/>; Mark Berman, “One Year after the San Bernardino Attack, Police Offer a Possible Motive as Questions Still Linger,” *Washington Post*, December 2, 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2016/12/02/one-year-after-san-bernardino-police-offer-a-possible-motive-as-questions-still-linger/>.

⁷⁶ Fathali Moghaddam, “The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration,” *American Psychologist* 60, no. 2 (February–March 2005), <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.60.2.161>.

⁷⁷ Moghaddam.

⁷⁸ Moghaddam.

⁷⁹ Moghaddam.

United States were inspired by online activity and in-person meetings, which led to escalating hatred and commitment to violence, despite the existence of non-violent, healthy community relationships. The 2015 San Bernardino mass casualty terrorist attack, which killed 14 and injured dozens more at a company Christmas party, was perpetrated by a married couple who were also homegrown violent extremists. One of the suspects, Syed Farook, was a well-liked county employee.⁸⁰ The duo was later killed by police after a car pursuit and shootout during which nearly 2,500 rounds were fired between the suspects and 23 police officers. The perpetrators had met online while discussing the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), later married, and planned the Christmas party attack as their hatred for America grew.⁸¹

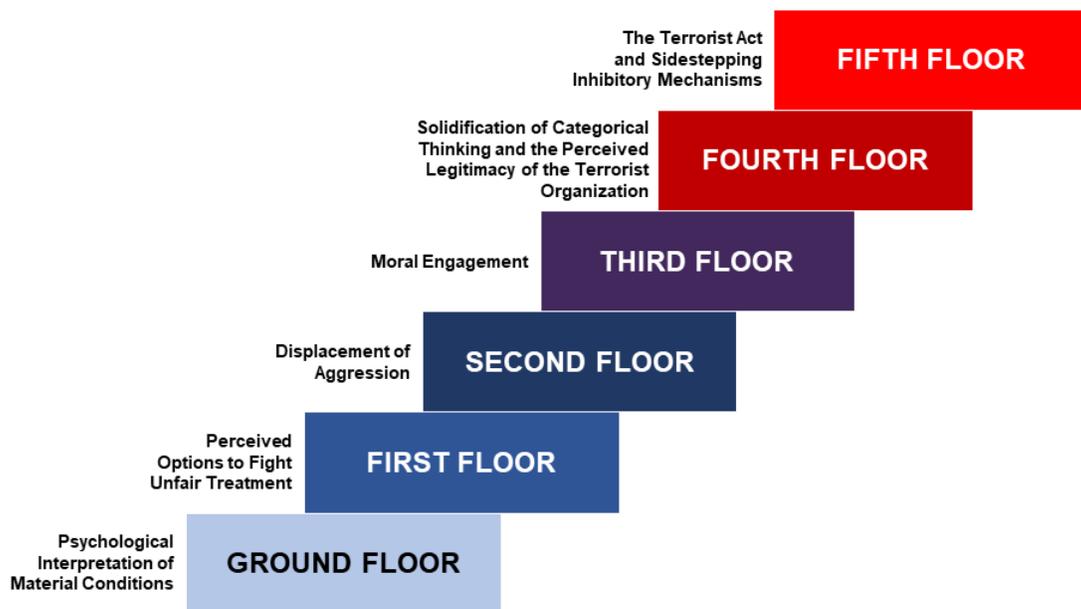


Figure 2. Moghaddam's Staircase to Terrorism⁸²

⁸⁰ Joe Monzingo, "'The Worst Thing Imaginable:' Bodies and Blood Everywhere after San Bernardino Terrorist Attack, DOJ Report Shows," *Los Angeles Times*, September 9, 2016, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-san-bernardino-terror--20160909-snap-story.html>.

⁸¹ Monzingo.

⁸² Adapted from Moghaddam, "The Staircase to Terrorism."

The search for identity is a normal and relevant process for every person, though it becomes especially germane for individuals with ideologically based grievances who are seeking self-worth and acceptance by others.⁸³ Perpetrators of mass casualty violence come from all walks of life but tend to share characteristics centered around anger, hopelessness, and perceived injustice.⁸⁴ Understanding the motivating factors that can trigger someone to commit mass casualty violence first requires an understanding of the forces that shape identity and the behavior of individuals.⁸⁵ Many radicalized individuals claim to suffer from perceived abuses from the government or society in general, and in response, they rebel and engage in acts of political and social violence.⁸⁶ While psychological frustration does not necessarily lead to violence, anger centered on perceived injustice, if prolonged and left unchecked, could result in bloodshed.⁸⁷ Recruiters from terrorist groups seem to understand this and use it to identify and solicit individuals who fit the script, as an individual's perceived abuses cause frustration and leave them looking for acceptance and control in groups that offer validation and support for their experiences.⁸⁸ According to research from the FBI's Behavior Analysis Unit, poignant characteristics exist among perpetrators of mass casualty events, including the need for revenge for a perceived grievance, a desire for notoriety, the devotion to solve a problem the offender determines to be unbearable, and the crusade for "justice."⁸⁹

In the world of an extremist, the out-group represents danger, and finding a resolution often takes the form of harassment, disturbance, or violence.⁹⁰ Inspiration from the in-group is powerful and can come from a variety of sources via online, face-to-face,

⁸³ Brannan, Strindberg, and Darken, *A Practitioner's Way Forward*.

⁸⁴ National Council for Behavioral Health, *Mass Violence in America*.

⁸⁵ Brannan, Strindberg, and Darken, *A Practitioner's Way Forward*.

⁸⁶ Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).

⁸⁷ Gurr.

⁸⁸ Smith, *How Radicalization to Terrorism Occurs in the United States*.

⁸⁹ James Silver, Andre Simons, and Sarah Craun, *A Study of Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters in the United States between 2000 and 2013* (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013), <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/pre-attack-behaviors-of-active-shooters-in-us-2000-2013.pdf/view>.

⁹⁰ Berger, *Extremism*.

or other venues. Numerous cases have shown young men and women, usually teens or young adults, who feel detached and disconnected from their environment and ultimately leave the comfort of America to travel to Syria in hopes of joining ISIS and fighting alongside jihadi warriors.⁹¹ Terrorist recruiters prey on these groups and are drawn to those who are detached, disenfranchised, and struggling with a crisis and looking for a solution.⁹²

An objective for modern-day law enforcement agencies is to recognize the existence of individuals who rely on violence to resolve injustices taking place in their social reality.⁹³ Offering alternative solutions to violence is a process that requires community support and a responsibility that law enforcement cannot shoulder alone. Applying community policing concepts leads the police agency toward community-level solutions, including educating community groups and police personnel about extremism and the dangers associated with it.⁹⁴

3. The Many Faces of Extremism

There is an emerging need among law enforcement professionals to understand more fully the concepts of extremism and domestic terrorism and to pursue solutions from a local level.⁹⁵ Understanding the factors that motivate the behaviors of extremist individuals will also strengthen the law enforcement and community response, offering prevention opportunities and diversion from violence. There are many types of violent extremist groups for law enforcement to be mindful of, and the ideologies associated with them can be complex.⁹⁶ These groups include the following:

⁹¹ Associated Press, “Girl, 16, Who Tried to Travel to Syria Must Be Removed from Her Home,” *Guardian*, August 21, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/aug/21/16-year-old-girl-syria-high-court-islamic-state>; Mike Hayes, “The Case of The Colorado Teen Who Tried to Wage Jihad in Syria,” BuzzFeed News, July 3, 2014, <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/mikehayes/the-case-of-the-colorado-teen-who-fell-in-love-and-tried-to>.

⁹² Berger, *Extremism*.

⁹³ Community Oriented Policing Services and International Association of Chiefs of Police, *Using Community Policing to Counter Violent Extremism: 5 Key Principles for Law Enforcement* (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 2014), <http://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo70207>.

⁹⁴ Community Oriented Policing Services and International Association of Chiefs of Police.

⁹⁵ Jackson et al., *Practical Terrorism Prevention*.

⁹⁶ “What Are Known Violent Extremist Groups?,” Federal Bureau of Investigation, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www.fbi.gov/cve508/teen-website/what-are-known-violent-extremist-groups>.

- Abortion extremists
- Al Qaeda- and ISIS-inspired extremists
- Anarchist extremists
- Animal rights extremists
- Black separatist extremists
- Environmental extremists
- Militia extremists
- Neo-Nazi & white-supremacist extremists
- Sovereign citizen extremists

Volumes of research have theorized about the ways in which an individual or a group radicalize to violence, and many researchers have suggested a connection between radicalization and a lack of education, low socioeconomic status, participation in religions that impose strict rules and mandates, or community status.⁹⁷ However, research has found no significant correlation between these things. Nevertheless, former neo-Nazi and white supremacist Christian Picciolini suggests that “potholes” in a person’s life (e.g., trauma, abuse, mental illness, poverty, or unemployment) make the individual more susceptible to the vice of extremism.⁹⁸

Despite the many variables that may feed the radicalization process, no specific process or trajectory leads to radicalization.⁹⁹ Extremism is a personal choice stemming from a complex process with a number of internal and external factors that contribute to the decision.¹⁰⁰ The 2018 death toll for extremist-related murders was linked primarily to

⁹⁷ Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 3rd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), <https://cup.columbia.edu/book/inside-terrorism/9780231174770>; Smith, *How Radicalization to Terrorism Occurs in the United States*; Pitcavage, *Murder and Extremism in the United States*; Jackson et al., *Practical Terrorism Prevention*.

⁹⁸ Yara Bayoumy and Kathy Gilsinan, “A Reformed White Nationalist Says the Worst Is Yet to Come,” *Atlantic*, August 6, 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/08/conversation-christian-picciolini/595543/>.

⁹⁹ Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*.

¹⁰⁰ Berger, *Extremism*.

Neo-Nazi, white-supremacist extremism; that year was also the fourth deadliest for all domestic extremist murders since 1970 (see Table 1).¹⁰¹

Table 1. Five Deadliest Years for Domestic Extremist Killings (1970–2018)¹⁰²

Year	Number of Deaths	Significant Incidents (5+ Deaths)
1995	184	Oklahoma City bombing (168 deaths)
2016	72	Orlando nightclub shooting (49 deaths)
2015	70	San Bernardino, Chattanooga, Charleston shootings (28 deaths total)
2018	50	Pittsburgh synagogue, Parkland High School shootings (28 deaths total)
2009	46	Ft. Hood shooting (13 deaths)

A report published by the Southern Poverty Law Center concerning domestic terrorism, with contributions from the University of Maryland’s Global Terrorism Database, found that 74 percent of all domestic extremist attacks were pre-planned and carried out by lone actors.¹⁰³ Additionally, most of the attacks involved multiple casualties accomplished during a shooting spree at locations such as synagogues, churches, schools, parking lots, restaurants, shopping centers, or other public venues.¹⁰⁴ In the United States, when a radicalized individual decides that killing is necessary, a firearm is the preferred weapon of choice.¹⁰⁵ Figure 3 highlights trends among mass casualty incidents.

¹⁰¹ Pitcavage, *Murder and Extremism in the United States*.

¹⁰² Source: Pitcavage, 9.

¹⁰³ Southern Poverty Law Center, *Age of the Wolf: A Study of the Rise of Lone Wolf and Leaderless Resistance Terrorism* (Montgomery, AL: Southern Poverty Law Center, 2015), 4, <https://www.splcenter.org/20150211/lone-wolf-report>.

¹⁰⁴ Southern Poverty Law Center.

¹⁰⁵ Southern Poverty Law Center.

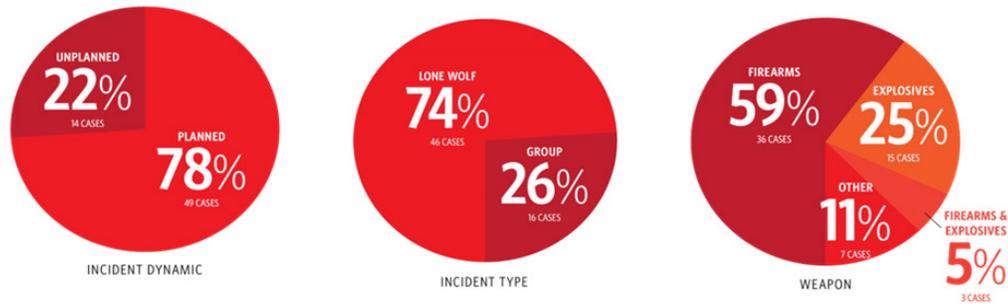


Figure 3. Domestic Terrorism Statistics¹⁰⁶

Absent an offender profile as an investigative tool, law enforcement needs education and awareness of how extremism and radicalization present themselves in society.¹⁰⁷ The following paragraphs discuss in greater detail the ways in which community policing strategies disrupt the process of violent extremism through local-level solutions.

4. The U.S. Response to Extremism

U.S. policymakers began to focus seriously on radicalization and violent ideologies, not after the 9/11 attacks but after the Fort Hood attack in 2009 and the attempted bombing in Times Square in 2010.¹⁰⁸ CVE programs are the primary response tools in the United States and other nations to prevent and prepare for radical, ideologically motivated acts of violence at the local level.¹⁰⁹

The notion of CVE was first introduced in Europe in 2003 as part of the United Kingdom’s response to acts of Islamist-inspired terrorism but expanded considerably after a series of coordinated suicide train bombings in 2005 that killed 52 people and injured

¹⁰⁶ Source: Southern Poverty Law Center, 9–10.

¹⁰⁷ “Why Do People Become Violent Extremists?,” Federal Bureau of Investigation, accessed January 31, 2019, <https://www.fbi.gov/cve508/teen-website/why-do-people-become-violent-extremists>.

¹⁰⁸ Jackson et al., *Practical Terrorism Prevention*, 45.

¹⁰⁹ “Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,” United Nations, Office of Counterterrorism, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/plan-of-action-to-prevent-violent-extremism>.

over 700 in London.¹¹⁰ Governments needed a preventative plan that would help deter homegrown acts of ideologically inspired violence, and the United Kingdom was the first to work in the problem space. European acts of extremist violence showed that a nation's response to terrorism was not limited to the deployment of military troops to a land far away but, instead, required a local law enforcement response for acts of terrorism on hometown soil.¹¹¹ The United Kingdom's CVE efforts identified and implemented local interventions for homegrown threats that involved community engagement and resiliency strategies.

The United States first adopted CVE in 2011, with President Barack Obama's 12-page *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*.¹¹² The strategy outlines a plan of action that communities should follow, especially Muslim-American communities.¹¹³ The report states, "Protecting American communities from al-Qa'ida's hateful ideology is not the work of the government alone. Communities—especially Muslim American communities whose children, families and neighbors are being targeted for recruitment by al-Qa'ida—are often the best positioned to take the lead because they know their communities best."¹¹⁴ The statement is clear—Muslim Americans are being targeted for acts of terrorism on U.S. soil—but singling out the Muslim community has created an albatross from whose burden American CVE cannot shake.¹¹⁵

5. American Law Enforcement's Response to Extremism

American police have their hands full when investigating serious crimes, and despite professional-grade criminal investigations and contemporary investigative

¹¹⁰ Christian Nünlist and Owen Frazer, "The Concept of Countering Violent Extremism," *Center for Security Studies Analyses in Security Policy*, no. 183 (December 2015): 4; Chris Graham, "What Is the Anti-Terror Prevent Programme and Why Is It Controversial?," *Telegraph*, May 26, 2017, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/0/anti-terror-prevent-programme-controversial/>.

¹¹¹ Nünlist and Frazer, "The Concept of Countering Violent Extremism."

¹¹² Obama, *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism*.

¹¹³ Obama.

¹¹⁴ Obama, 3.

¹¹⁵ Obama.

techniques, most violent crimes go unsolved.¹¹⁶ Each year, American law enforcement agencies voluntarily report hate crime data to the Department of Justice for record-keeping purposes, but only 12 percent of law enforcement agencies in the United States report that hate-motivated crimes are occurring within their jurisdictions.¹¹⁷ With many crimes of hate left undocumented, law enforcement is left with no information upon which to base an investigation or intervention. Over 90 American cities with populations greater than 100,000 reported to the FBI that zero hate crimes occurred within their individual jurisdictions in a one-year timeframe.¹¹⁸ FBI data on hate crimes are difficult to quantify, making it nearly impossible to understand the true rates of these crimes in the country.¹¹⁹ Making matters worse, hate crime statutes are inconsistent from state to state, and some states have no hate crime ordinances whatsoever.¹²⁰ Annual statistics pertaining to hate crimes are submitted voluntarily to the FBI by police agencies around the country, and for some states, only a small percentage of law enforcement agencies choose to share data (see Figure 4).¹²¹ For example, in 2017, only 30 percent of police agencies in California submitted any hate crime data to the FBI.¹²² With these crimes vastly underreported, one could infer two things: that officers and communities are unfamiliar or untrained with hate crime recognition, or diverse communities may not trust law enforcement enough to report the crimes. Such underreporting indicates that local police jurisdictions, despite their best

¹¹⁶ John Gramlich, “Most Violent and Property Crimes in the U.S. Go Unsolved,” *Fact Tank* (blog), March 1, 2017, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/03/01/most-violent-and-property-crimes-in-the-u-s-go-unsolved/>.

¹¹⁷ Federal Bureau of Investigation, “2017 Hate Crime Statistics Released.”

¹¹⁸ “ADL Calls for Action after New FBI Data Shows Rise in Hate Crimes,” Anti-Defamation League, November 13, 2017, https://www.adl.org/news/press-releases/adl-calls-for-action-after-new-fbi-data-shows-rise-in-hate-crimes?source=post_page.

¹¹⁹ Abigail Hauslohner, “Hate Crimes Reports Are Soaring—But We Still Don’t Know How Many People Are Victimized,” *Washington Post*, November 17, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2017/11/17/hate-crimes-are-soaring-but-we-still-dont-know-how-many-people-are-victimized/>.

¹²⁰ “Laws and Policies,” Department of Justice, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/laws-and-policies>.

¹²¹ Hauslohner, “Hate Crimes Reports Are Soaring.”

¹²² Hauslohner.

efforts in community policing, are missing out on connecting and building trust within the very communities that hate crimes occur.

Fewer than half of crimes are reported, and fewer than half are solved

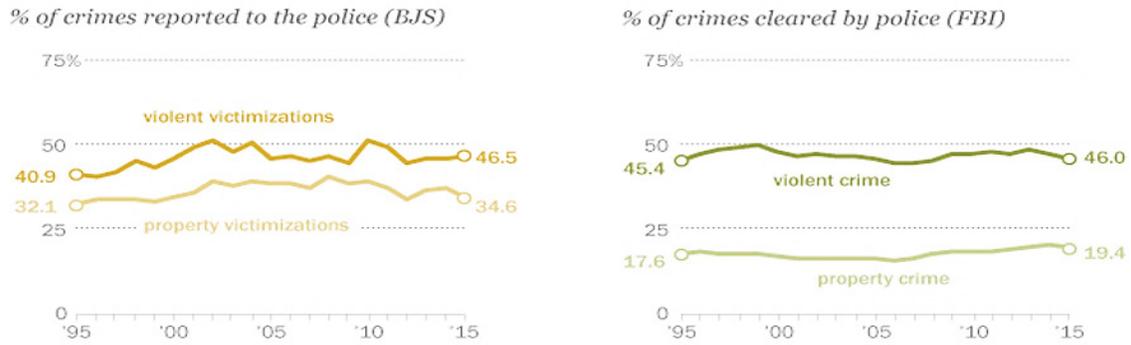


Figure 4. Unreported and Unsolved Crimes in the United States¹²³

B. CONCLUSION

Violent extremism has continued to plague police managers and homeland security professionals since its inception. Difficult to identify, tricky to interpret, and viewed with apprehension and suspicion by minority communities, it nonetheless presents itself as the emerging homeland security threat of our time. Every community in the United States is susceptible to extremist belief, the threat of radicalization, and the possibility of mass casualty violence. Like any other crime and disorder issue that beleaguers local communities, extremism and radicalization need intervention and prevention strategies from police leadership.¹²⁴ Merging American law enforcement with violent extremism prevention strategies has been, and continues to be, a difficult topic to advance but cannot be tackled without an accurate understanding and valid definition of the problem. The root cause of many complications lies in the invalid and faulty interpretations of the problem.

¹²³ Source: Gramlich, “Most Violent and Property Crimes in the U.S. Go Unsolved.”

¹²⁴ Smith, *How Radicalization to Terrorism Occurs in the United States*.

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III. HISTORY OF CVE IN THE UNITED STATES

The 2014 CVE pilot programs uncovered the difficult processes law enforcement encounters when designing new crime prevention systems that involve immigrant, refugee, and diverse communities. The process is even more challenging when community groups feel stigmatized and at risk for civil rights violations based on religious beliefs and practices; this is exactly what happened when community groups in selected cities discovered they had been chosen for a CVE test project. This chapter examines CVE pilot programs in Boston, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis and the challenges that arose when community groups believed they were being targeted for innocuous actions interpreted by the government as pre-terrorism activities. This chapter also identifies the vulnerabilities exposed by research organizations, civil rights institutions, and diverse community organizations that felt betrayed and deceived by the effort.

A. 2014 PILOT PROGRAMS

With the threat of violent extremism permeating communities in the United States—and with the endorsement and strength of the Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Homeland Security, and National Counter Terrorism Center—three cities were selected to implement CVE strategies and community programming.¹²⁵ According to the DOJ, “The cities were chosen based on their existing achievements with community engagement.”¹²⁶ With these criteria in mind, Boston, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis were selected, each due to its pre-existing community outreach, public–private partnerships, and intervention and interdiction models.¹²⁷ For example, Minneapolis was described as “home to the largest Somali population in North America” and a target of “overseas terror

¹²⁵ “Pilot Programs Are Key to Our Countering Violent Extremism Efforts,” Department of Justice, February 18, 2015, <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/blog/pilot-programs-are-key-our-countering-violent-extremism-efforts>.

¹²⁶ Department of Justice.

¹²⁷ Department of Justice.

organizations” attempting to enlist citizens to take up the fight of Al Shabab and ISIS against western influence and occupation.¹²⁸

1. Boston CVE

Announced to the public in February 2015, and preceding the implementation of the CVE program, the United States Attorney’s Office in Massachusetts provided a reassuring message to the Boston community, promising thoughtful and focused work to diminish acts of violence connected with extremism.¹²⁹ It described the involvement of leaders of the community, educators, faith leaders, and mental health experts who were engaged in creating safe and healthy neighborhoods.¹³⁰ The framework was not only a guiding document for those involved in the model but also a way to formally recognize the community leaders for the important work they had yet to accomplish, almost as if preparing for the backlash that was soon to come. Boston was already involved in prevention and solution-based models with specific programs, such as the Boston Youth Violence Prevention Forum and the Defending Childhood Initiative, having been implemented in the community.¹³¹ The Boston CVE program was intentionally inserted into pre-existing community outreach networks in the city’s Somali neighborhoods.¹³² Although the CVE framework contained many of the same ingredients as the aforementioned childhood initiatives, with a comprehensive approach to problem-solving involving numerous sectors in the region, the focus would instead be on Boston’s Muslim community.¹³³

¹²⁸ Department of Justice.

¹²⁹ United States Attorney’s Office, District of Massachusetts, *A Framework for Prevention and Intervention Strategies*.

¹³⁰ United States Attorney’s Office, District of Massachusetts.

¹³¹ “National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention Communities: Boston,” Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/preventing-youth-violence/forum-communities/boston/brief>.

¹³² United States Attorney’s Office, District of Massachusetts, *A Framework for Prevention and Intervention Strategies*.

¹³³ United States Attorney’s Office, District of Massachusetts.

In 2015, Harvard University conducted an evaluation of the Boston CVE program’s outcomes, including the thoughts and attitudes of the community members for which the model was intended.¹³⁴ As part of this evaluation, interviews were conducted with program participants, community organizations, and police personnel, and perceptions and opinions were assessed of participating stakeholders, who were encouraged to provide any feedback they found appropriate for the research team. The report concluded with recommendations and a logic model that aligned activities, goals, and outcomes.¹³⁵ Specifically, the conclusions highlighted several concerns about CVE, the first of which being the participants’ aversion to the phrase “countering violent extremism.” Participants believed the term to be confounding and misleading—it worked to undermine the program before its implementation—as they connected it only to Islamic-inspired acts of terrorism, which then inappropriately cast a shadow of doubt on the entire Muslim community.¹³⁶

In addition, evaluation data were consistent with outcries from the target community, who described the CVE effort as “authoritarian” and racially motivated.¹³⁷ One interviewer who participated in the evaluation provided startling insight that highlighted two serious problems: the program provided no education or awareness of how someone becomes radicalized, and the focus on the Muslim community was suspicious by design, creating a divide between law enforcement and Muslims. As described in the report,

So, by trying to prevent Islamic extremism we never got to the root cause of what first led to people becoming radical, and then we actually help promote more radicals, because we are actively attacking people who are currently peaceful, we are surveilling people that for as far as we know are peaceful individuals.¹³⁸

Another salient problem with the program was rooted in the challenge of pursuing ideologically inspired violence and the notion that a particular religion could inspire an act

¹³⁴ Savoia et al., *Greater Boston CVE Pilot Program*.

¹³⁵ Savoia et al.

¹³⁶ Savoia et al, 9.

¹³⁷ Nguyen, “Civil Rights Groups Protest Federal Program.”

¹³⁸ Savoia et al., *Greater Boston CVE Pilot Program*, 20.

of terrorism.¹³⁹ This information substantiates the research from the Brennan Center for Justice, which labels CVE as harmful for minority communities while offering no crime reduction benefit or improved level of community safety.¹⁴⁰ Other problems with the Boston model included an increasing mistrust in local law enforcement and the FBI because CVE suggests a link between Islam and terrorism.¹⁴¹

As a result of the study, the researchers developed a list of 86 recommendations for future CVE programs, categorized under three distinct themes: fostering civic engagement and cultural awareness, building trust and earning social support, and improving existing social service systems (e.g., housing, schools, and mental health), so all humans can improve and reach their full potential.¹⁴² The takeaway for police managers was the importance of listening to differing opinions from community stakeholders, expanding community policing principles to all law enforcement areas that have community contact, and avoiding the perception of unintended profiling or targeting of minority communities.

As a means of building trust and social support, program evaluators specifically identified the need to expand community policing, and numerous participants provided favorable feedback about the Boston Police Department's historically positive influence in the community.¹⁴³ However, this praise was accompanied by an expressed need for additional *authentic* community engagement to build trust and fundamentally improve relationships between the police and community.¹⁴⁴ The idea of authenticity from police, when collaborating with communities, is worthy of additional exploration and consideration from police leaders. In today's social media era, police agencies post images and videos of officers dancing in the community, handing out ice cream, and shoveling snow, designed to humanize the men and women wearing the badge. But does this kind of outreach really build relationships with skeptical community groups? A contrasting

¹³⁹ Savoia et al.

¹⁴⁰ Patel and Koushik, *Countering Violent Extremism*.

¹⁴¹ Nguyen, "Civil Rights Groups Protest Federal Program."

¹⁴² Savoia et al., *Greater Boston CVE Pilot Program*, 37.

¹⁴³ Savoia et al.

¹⁴⁴ Savoia et al.

approach is to begin with valid objectives that add value to the community: listening fully to community concerns and being willing, as an agency, to be vulnerable, trustworthy, and open to criticism.¹⁴⁵ This approach was validated by an interviewer from the community, who noted the significance of the police–community exchange: “Build trust in the community, not just be involved in the community for your spreadsheet, ‘Oh yeah, I talked to the Muslim community. They seemed okay.’ But come in and really get to know the community.”¹⁴⁶

The programming was designed to focus exclusively on the city’s Somali population to create partnerships and trust within the diverse population. However, as these efforts were aimed at preventing radicalization and bringing awareness to the radicalization process, the Somali community was unconvinced of the stated intention and, instead, believed it was a surveillance program in disguise.¹⁴⁷ The method by which the Muslim community of Boston was singled out for CVE led many to feel stigmatized and targeted by law enforcement, which inevitably led to concerns regarding possible civil rights violations. From the program evaluation of the Boston CVE program, the evaluators discovered that if the unification of CVE strategies and community policing were to succeed, the foundational requirements would include listening and validating the opinions of stakeholders, avoiding profiling, and expanding community policing.¹⁴⁸

2. Los Angeles CVE

The Los Angeles CVE program was formally evaluated by researchers from the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).¹⁴⁹ From these evaluations, the most poignant observation included the wide scope of

¹⁴⁵ Henna Inam, “Five Practices to Build Authentic Relationships,” *Forbes*, November 5, 2018, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/hennainam/2018/11/05/five-practices-to-build-authentic-relationships-at-work/>.

¹⁴⁶ Savoia et al., *Greater Boston CVE Pilot Program*, 41.

¹⁴⁷ Gabrielle Emanuel, “Federal Anti-Terrorism Program Runs into Trust Issues in Boston,” National Public Radio (Boston), August 29, 2019, <https://www.wgbh.org/news/local-news/2019/08/29/federal-anti-terrorism-program-runs-into-trust-issues-in-boston>.

¹⁴⁸ Savoia et al., *Greater Boston CVE Pilot Program*.

¹⁴⁹ Weine et al., *Leveraging a Targeted Violence Prevention Program*.

attention, as this program did not single out any particular ethnic group or population but used a “whole community” approach.¹⁵⁰ The pillars of the Los Angeles CVE were rooted in a public health framework and separated into three areas: prevention, intervention, and interdiction.¹⁵¹ The program highlighted the value of teachers, social service providers, mental health experts, and others who were indirectly contributing to violence prevention in the community, including the Los Angeles Department of Mental Health; Los Angeles County of Public Health; Los Angeles Human Services; faith-based organizations; and the full spectrum of Los Angeles law enforcement agencies—the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, DHS, and the local U.S. Attorney’s Office.¹⁵²

The Los Angeles model focused on all forms of violent extremism, not just Islamic extremism, and seemed to recognize the difficult challenges for Muslim Americans after 9/11.¹⁵³ Specifically, the community had suffered discrimination and been the target of hate crimes after the 9/11 attacks, and Los Angeles was thoughtful in the process of building trust within the Muslim community, which was reflected in the decision not to focus CVE efforts solely on this population.¹⁵⁴ Instead, building relationships within all diverse communities was a driving factor, as opposed to targeting any specific religion, race, or ethnic group.

Day-to-day work for the pilot program was divided according to the community stakeholder’s expertise, though the law enforcement element concentrated on a wide array of community presentations designed to educate and bring awareness to violent extremism.¹⁵⁵ Police officers partnered with representatives from the U.S. Attorney’s Office and ramped up education within the city, which included presentations about

¹⁵⁰ Weine et al.

¹⁵¹ Los Angeles Interagency Coordination Group, *Framework for Countering Violent Extremism*.

¹⁵² Weine et al., *Leveraging a Targeted Violence Prevention Program*.

¹⁵³ Weine et al.

¹⁵⁴ Riad Abdelkarim, “American Muslims and 9/11: A Community Looks Back . . . and to the Future,” *Washington Report*, September 2002, <https://www.wrmea.org/002-september-october/american-muslims-and-9/11-a-community-looks-back...and-to-the-future.html>.

¹⁵⁵ Weine et al., *Leveraging a Targeted Violence Prevention Program*.

community safety, hate crimes, types of extremism, and police services available in the community. Briefings took place in schools, places of worship, community centers, libraries, recreation centers, and other public forums.¹⁵⁶ Community-based education and discussions included information about the day-to-day work of local police, resources available in the community that were designed specifically to help troubled individuals, and the threats that necessitate contacting the police.¹⁵⁷ Workshops and seminars were all encompassing and provided education about hate crimes, immigration issues, civil rights information, and consumer fraud tips.¹⁵⁸ The approach was generally safety focused, with CVE viewed as another component intended to keep the community safe.

Officers and other stakeholders discussed a wide variety of safety and security issues that affected all communities and included tips about keeping communities safe, violent extremism awareness, and the support systems within the area that offered support to those affected by violence or extremism.¹⁵⁹ Transparency and open lines of communication were key to the program and helped to build trust and promote dialogue between all members of the community, including immigrants and refugees.¹⁶⁰ This kind of interaction created cohesion and connectedness and increased the level of trust between the police and diverse communities.¹⁶¹

According to the UCLA report, this approach was beneficial in that it recognized the limitations of law enforcement and valued the expansion of public health, social service providers, and community organizations that contribute to resilient communities.¹⁶² Support from the U.S. Attorney's Office contributed to the positive aspects of the Los

¹⁵⁶ Weine et al.

¹⁵⁷ Weine et al.

¹⁵⁸ Los Angeles Interagency Coordination Group, *Framework for Countering Violent Extremism*.

¹⁵⁹ Weine et al., *Leveraging a Targeted Violence Prevention Program*.

¹⁶⁰ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, *Community Policing to Counter Violent Extremism: A Process Evaluation in Los Angeles* (College Park, MD: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, 2017), https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_CSTAB_CommunityPolicingtoCounterViolentExtremism_July2017.pdf.

¹⁶¹ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

¹⁶² Weine et al., *Leveraging a Targeted Violence Prevention Program*.

Angeles model by providing training and guidance to community members, with an emphasis on civil rights and liberties, all of which intended to ease the fears of those concerned about CVE being used as a method for surveillance and secretive investigations.¹⁶³ The office also assisted with investigations and prosecutions of civil rights violations, hate crimes, and other complex federal crimes, as well as worked with victims of hate crimes on a regular basis.¹⁶⁴

Despite the effort from community organizations and police to create relationships in diverse communities while casting a light on violent extremism awareness, critics insisted the program was a surveillance scheme with an anti-Muslim slant.¹⁶⁵ After the program concluded, and following the DHS evaluation, former Mayor Eric Garcetti turned down a \$425,000 federal grant in 2018 to expand the work that had been done.¹⁶⁶ The DHS grant program was initially funded under President Obama, but it was formally awarded under President Trump in 2017. The accusations of CVE being disguised as a Muslim surveillance program, coupled with the political displeasure of President Trump by Democrats nationwide, spelled disaster for CVE. Several cities and community organizations followed suit and walked away from CVE awards.¹⁶⁷

Overall, the Los Angeles CVE plan was innovative in that it utilized community policing practices alongside a public health design, and included collaborative efforts by a wide variety of community stakeholders. Duke University recently examined community policing practices in the United States and concluded that promising programs require the following:

Deep leadership commitment to community engagement, broad based engagement efforts that span multiple communities, ensuring that police

¹⁶³ Weine et al.

¹⁶⁴ “United States Attorney’s Office, District of California, Civil Rights Section,” Department of Justice, February 2, 2016, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-cdca/civil-division/civil-rights>.

¹⁶⁵ Patel, Lindsay, and DenUyl, “Countering Violent Extremism in the Trump Era.”

¹⁶⁶ Deepa Bharath, “LA Mayor Turns Down \$425K in Federal Funding to Counter Violent Extremism after Opposition from Civil Rights Groups Stalls Process,” *Los Angeles Daily News*, August 16, 2018, <http://www.dailynews.com/la-mayor-turns-down-425k-in-federal-funding-to-counter-violent-extremism-after-opposition-from-civil-rights-groups-stalls-process>.

¹⁶⁷ Bharath.

forces are trained in outreach techniques and cultural competency, hiring a diverse police force, using outreach to address the core needs of the community, and finding ways to divert individuals away from the criminal justice system when possible by providing them the resources and assistance they need.¹⁶⁸

The LAPD's CVE model highlighted several of these variables, including training officers, enlisting community support, and creating intervention opportunities that replace acts of violence.¹⁶⁹

With funding from the government, Los Angeles police officers, faith leaders, community organizers, and other local stakeholders took a gamble on a CVE pilot project and tried something new, working in collaboration and educating the community about violent extremism while integrating city services and programs into diverse communities. LAPD managers involved community stakeholders connected to mental health, education, social services, and public safety when creating their CVE model, providing an example of the positive work that can be done when connecting community policing and public health systems.¹⁷⁰

3. Minneapolis CVE

Minneapolis was chosen for the pilot program for three primary reasons. First, the police department and city were known for their existing, progressive, and community-focused outreach programs. Second, at least 30,000 Muslim Somali citizens were residing in the Twin Cities, the largest Somali population in the United States. Third, between 2008 and 2013, dozens of young Somali men had departed the Minneapolis area and attempted to join al-Shabaab, a militant, radical, Islamist insurgent organization at war in Somalia.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ Schanzer et al., *The Challenge and Promise of Using Community Policing*.

¹⁶⁹ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, *Community Policing to Counter Violent Extremism*.

¹⁷⁰ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

¹⁷¹ United States Attorney's Office, District of Minnesota, *Building Community Resilience*.

Federal officials were concerned that ISIS recruiters were targeting Somali-American Muslims and that a terrorist recruiting network had already been in operation.¹⁷²

Somali citizens have been relocating to the area since the 1980s and developing friends, neighbors, families, businesses, and identities shaped by American culture.¹⁷³ When the Somali community learned that they had been singled out by the federal government for a program targeting extremism, there was a ripple of shock and disappointment throughout the community, leading to questions about the lack of inclusion of other ethnic groups in the program.¹⁷⁴ Others expressed displeasure in being treated “like a lab rat” and questioned why other communities and religions had not been selected.¹⁷⁵

As with the other pilot programs, the plan for the Minnesota CVE program was developed and implemented by the local U.S. Attorney’s Office, with input from 15 Somali Americans appointed to serve on the Building Community Resilience Committee.¹⁷⁶ The Minnesota Council on American-Islamic Relations immediately condemned the CVE plan and pointed out that domestic terrorism was more likely to be carried out by white American males than by Somali Americans.¹⁷⁷ For some, the idea that the U.S. Attorney’s Office, usually engaged in the prosecution of civil and criminal cases, was now creating an outreach program designed to prevent violent crime was in itself suspicious and, ultimately, furthered the belief that the Somali community was being unfairly targeted.¹⁷⁸

An evaluation of the Minneapolis CVE model was later conducted by the University of Southern California’s National Center of Excellence for Risk and Economic

¹⁷² Raya Jalabi, “Six Minnesota Men Charged with Conspiring to Support Isis in Syria,” *Guardian*, April 20, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/apr/20/six-minnesota-men-islamic-state-syria-somali-american>.

¹⁷³ Sperber, “Somalis in Minnesota Question Counter-Extremism Program.”

¹⁷⁴ Sperber.

¹⁷⁵ Erroll Southers and Justin Hienz, *Foreign Fighters: Terrorist Recruitment and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Programs in Minneapolis-St. Paul* (Los Angeles: University of Southern California, April 2015), <http://securitydebrief.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Foreign-Fighters-Terrorist-Recruitment-and-CVE-in-Minneapolis-St-Paul.pdf>.

¹⁷⁶ United States Attorney’s Office, District of Minnesota, *Building Community Resilience*.

¹⁷⁷ Sperber, “Somalis in Minnesota Question Counter-Extremism Program.”

¹⁷⁸ Bergen and Salyk-Virk, “Alternative Approach to Preventing Extremist Violence.”

Analysis of Terrorism Events in partnership with the DHS Science and Technology Directorate.¹⁷⁹ The research revealed that the model was community centric and began with a series of neighborhood meetings with religious groups, elders, business leaders, social workers, civil rights representatives, community groups, youth, and law enforcement.¹⁸⁰ The groups were asked to provide input regarding ideal components of a holistic, community-led CVE program, with community engagement being the most commonly identified element. In other words, the community wanted to be the primary ingredient used to disrupt and prevent violent extremism (see Figure 5).¹⁸¹

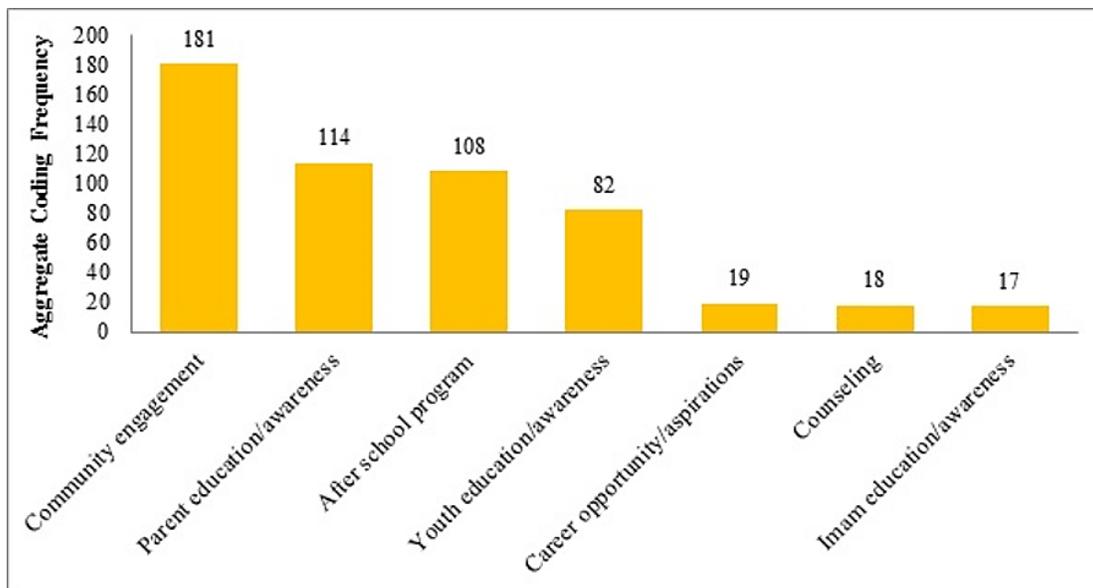


Figure 5. Minneapolis-St. Paul Community Program Recommendations¹⁸²

Additional information collected from the meetings highlighted four root causes the group believed contributed to terrorist recruiting: disengaged youth, no connection to religious leaders, problems in school, and a lack of positive social opportunities outside the

¹⁷⁹ Southers and Hienz, *Foreign Fighters*.

¹⁸⁰ Southers and Hienz.

¹⁸¹ Southers and Hienz.

¹⁸² Source: Southers and Hienz, 29.

classroom.¹⁸³ Community members recognized that adolescents who suffered from an identity crisis needed positive influencers around them. Absent informal community leaders paired with disenfranchised youth was a recipe for trouble. The information provided by the focus group opened the aperture on the power of community influence and the level of awareness of the radicalization problem from within the community.¹⁸⁴ Sociological perspectives—i.e., how the community observes, identifies, and connects with those who make up the community—also represent an important element of the study of terrorism.¹⁸⁵

The Minneapolis focus group, all originally born in Somalia or a neighboring country, recognized that some people were connected to the Minneapolis community and felt as if they were part of the fabric of the community while others were disconnected, alienated, and out of touch with the social environment around them.¹⁸⁶ The community feedback provided to the research teams validated the usefulness of local service providers (e.g., schools, mental health experts, and social service providers). The importance of bystanders is discussed later in the thesis, but this section draws attention to trusted members within the community who also fill that role—teachers, mental health professionals, nurses, librarians, and other trusted community leaders who someone might confide in if something is amiss with a friend, family member, or loved one.¹⁸⁷

Despite the negative perception of CVE within the community, Somali-born residents of Minnesota recognized that a radicalization problem existed and it was incumbent on the local community and active efforts by the community to disrupt the process.¹⁸⁸ Generally speaking, research has shown that a community is more likely to

¹⁸³ Southers and Hienz.

¹⁸⁴ Southers and Hienz.

¹⁸⁵ Brannan, Strindberg, and Darken, *A Practitioner's Way Forward*.

¹⁸⁶ Southers and Hienz, *Foreign Fighters*.

¹⁸⁷ Michael J. Williams, John G. Horgan, and William P. Evans, "The Critical Role of Friends in Networks for Countering Violent Extremism: Toward a Theory of Vicarious Help-Seeking," *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* 8, no. 1 (January 2016): 45–65, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2015.1101147>.

¹⁸⁸ Southers and Hienz, *Foreign Fighters*.

respond with conviction instead of trepidation when approached as a collaborative partner in the process and given the chance to contribute probable solutions.¹⁸⁹ This proved to be true when several Somali organizations in Minnesota, after learning of the CVE model, developed youth mentoring and after-school programs for Somali youth, while other community groups became involved in Somali family unity and social justice work.¹⁹⁰

The CVE evaluation team closed its report by acknowledging the work in Minneapolis was far from over, with successful ISIS recruiting efforts having left a blemish on the community. The report encouraged local police and community groups to continue coordination, participation, and teamwork while working to eliminate the threat of terrorist recruitment of vulnerable youth.¹⁹¹

B. CONCLUSION

The introduction of CVE to American communities through the three-city pilot plans was eye opening in many ways. It revealed the complexity and controversy between diverse communities and law enforcement when both are working together to keep American communities safe. Despite the decades of positive and impactful community policing efforts that have taken place across the United States, immigrant and other diverse communities still have valid and understandable suspicions of American law enforcement. Police managers must acknowledge that whatever synergy currently exists between local-level law enforcement and diverse community groups can quickly fade when communities perceive they are being targeted for enforcement efforts. This insight was validated when numerous cities and diverse community organizations refused to accept millions of dollars in CVE programming aid, thereby distancing themselves from law enforcement cooperation and outreach.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ Southers and Hienz.

¹⁹⁰ Bergen and Salyk-Virk, “Alternative Approach to Preventing Extremist Violence.”

¹⁹¹ Southers and Hienz, *Foreign Fighters*.

¹⁹² “Chart: CVE Funding under Obama and Trump Administrations,” Brennan Center for Justice, accessed August 19, 2019, https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/CVE%20Chart%20Funding_final%202.pdf.

Boston, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis created fundamentally different models; however, each program suffered from the same stumbling blocks: (1) a distaste for the “CVE” label coupled with the confounding interpretation of the term and (2) the perception that CVE was an uncoordinated and undisciplined Muslim surveillance tool with no preliminary community cooperation, thus exposing it to civil rights abuses and restrictions.

IV. VULNERABILITIES OF CVE EXPOSED

The three city pilot programs had a significant negative impact on the future of localized terrorism prevention work in the United States. Despite the perception of CVE as a program built upon entrapment, spying, and alleged use of informants within the Muslim community, law enforcement managers and homeland security professionals continue to forge ahead in the space of terrorism prevention. The outcomes and conclusions uncovered by the CVE research teams provide guidance for police and homeland security professionals for future violence prevention programs. This chapter reflects on the uncovered weaknesses of CVE that ultimately lead to recommendations for community-based violence prevention programs in the future.

A. MISCONCEPTIONS OF MUSLIM RADICALIZATION

For over a decade, the government has been warning its citizens about the dangers of radicalization within the Muslim-American population. Originally published in 2011 and updated in 2016, *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States* is the official document with strategies and plans for CVE, specifically identifying the Muslim community as a target audience.¹⁹³ Not surprisingly, the immigrant communities that were targeted by the pilot plans continue to be leery of spying and surveillance of their communities, both from police officials and other community members working on behalf of the police.¹⁹⁴

According to a 2002 FBI report, Muslim Americans went from being the least targeted religious group to being the most targeted within a one-year period, with a 1,600 percent increase in hate crimes between 2001 and 2002.¹⁹⁵ Not surprisingly, there was a sense of considerable unease in the Muslim community following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and CVE programs have contributed to the unease in these

¹⁹³ Obama, *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism*.

¹⁹⁴ Sperber, "Somalis in Minnesota Question Counter-Extremism Program."

¹⁹⁵ Curt Anderson, "FBI: Hate Crimes vs. Muslims Rise," Associated Press News, November 2002, <https://apnews.com/5e249fb6e4dc184720e3428c9d0bd04>.

communities by narrowing the scope and focus of violence prevention to Muslim-American communities.¹⁹⁶

Muslim Americans are as concerned about pursuing the “American dream” as any other American citizens, which is reflected in statistics describing the demographics of Muslim communities (see Figure 6). On average, half of Muslim adults in the United States are married, they have 2.4 children, 31 percent have college or postgraduate degrees (31 percent of other U.S. Americans also have college education), and their population is as likely as other Americans to report a household income of \$100,000 or higher (i.e., 24 percent of Muslims, compared to 23 percent of Americans citizens, without consideration for cultural differences).¹⁹⁷ Muslim Americans make countless positive contributions to society and represent a meaningful segment of American culture from which law enforcement can substantially benefit. The demographic has always been involved with protecting their communities, engaging in self-policing, denouncing violence, and encouraging others to engage civically.¹⁹⁸ In New York City, Muslim community members patrol the streets, help to explain cultural differences to citizens, assist the New York City Police Department (NYPD) at traffic accidents, and report suspicious incident and behavior to police. While some neighbors feel uncomfortable with the informal patrols, the NYPD command views them as an opportunity to develop a productive alliance and supports the program.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ Anderson.

¹⁹⁷ Pew Research Center.

¹⁹⁸ Charles Kurzman, “Muslim-American Involvement with Violent Extremism” (Chapel Hill, NC: Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security, January 22, 2019), 13.

¹⁹⁹ Alexandra E. Petri, “Muslims Form Community Patrol. Some Neighbors Say No, Thanks,” *New York Times*, February 3, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/03/nyregion/muslim-community-patrol-brooklyn.html>.

Nine-in-ten U.S. Muslims proud to be American

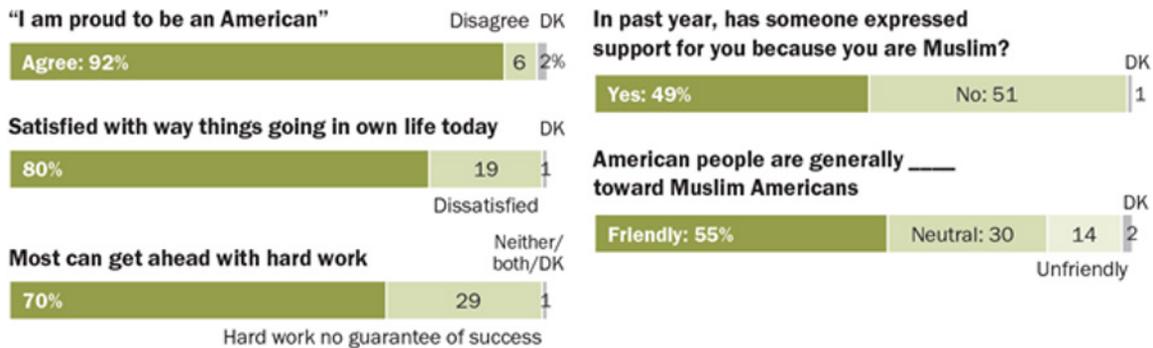


Figure 6. Demographic Portrait of Muslim Americans²⁰⁰

Right-wing violence outpaces ISIS-inspired acts of terrorism in the United States, and radical Muslims make up a very small, unique subset of individuals among this sizeable American population.²⁰¹ Law enforcement needs to consider this fact when deciding how and where to deploy the resources available.²⁰² If law enforcement chooses to focus exclusively on Islamic-inspired violence, what does this leave in terms of the remaining finite resources to address other types of extremism, including neo-Nazi, racist skinhead, or other forms of white-supremacist ideologies?

In sum, with the limited number of CVE programs taking place across the country and the negative undertones associated with CVE, Muslim Americans demonstrate a commitment to safety by relying on their own communities and self-designed prevention efforts to counter ideologically inspired violence.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ Source: Pew Research Center, *U.S. Muslims Concerned about Their Place in Society, but Continue to Believe in the American Dream* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, July 26, 2017), 7 <https://www.pewforum.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2017/07/U.S.-MUSLIMS-FULL-REPORT-with-population-update-v2.pdf>.

²⁰¹ Victoria DeSimone, "From the Ground Up: Combatting the Rise of Right-Wing Terror," Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 1, 2019, <https://www.csis.org/ground-combatting-rise-right-wing-terror>.

²⁰² "What Is the Truth about American Muslims?," Teaching Tolerance, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/publications/what-is-the-truth-about-american-muslims>.

²⁰³ Kurzman, "Muslim-American Involvement with Violent Extremism."

B. LACK OF CLARITY ON DOMESTIC CVE AND TERRORISM

CVE was intended to supplement existing law enforcement efforts connected to localized acts of terrorism.²⁰⁴ Prior to CVE efforts, the only anti-terrorism tools being utilized in the United States were traditional investigative tactics, including surveillance, lengthy investigations, and rigorous prosecutions for those engaged in terrorism.²⁰⁵ The three city pilot programs were designed to prevent violence through soft power, community outreach principles, and the provision of necessary resources to those who might be vulnerable to radicalization. However, prior to the CVE efforts in these pilot programs, the methods of intervention were limited or even non-existent.

As described in prior chapters, initial CVE programs focused narrowly on specific target groups and were rightfully met with criticism and contempt. One of the prominent takeaways for police and homeland security professionals was to recognize the need for transparency and straight-forward information with the community, preferably before the program becomes operational. A parallel problem of CVE is the idea of extremism and violence and their connection to terrorism. Violence that is premeditated and inspired by an ideology may look and feel like an act of terrorism but is often not classified as such.²⁰⁶ Law enforcement professionals often refer to a domestic act of violence as terrorism when, in fact, a federal penalty does not exist.²⁰⁷ *Domestic terrorism* is defined in the U.S. Code, but it is not codified in prosecutable federal law, and the terrorist organizations primarily recognized by the United States are foreign Islamist terrorist groups located overseas.²⁰⁸ Another poignant challenge associated with CVE is the overarching and infringing approach on the freedoms of speech and religion, prompting civil rights groups to denounce the effort directly to the White House.²⁰⁹ The lack of consideration of civil liberties was

²⁰⁴ Obama, *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism*.

²⁰⁵ Jackson et al., *Practical Terrorism Prevention*.

²⁰⁶ Pascus, "What Is 'Domestic Terrorism'?"

²⁰⁷ Robert B. Chesney, "Should We Create a Federal Crime of 'Domestic Terrorism'?", Lawfare, August 8, 2019, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/should-we-create-federal-crime-domestic-terrorism>.

²⁰⁸ Pascus, "What Is 'Domestic Terrorism'?"

²⁰⁹ Nguyen, "Civil Rights Groups Protest Federal Program."

another problematic area with the initial CVE plan, requiring additional information and demonstrating insufficient input about program design from communities.

While the intent of this research is not to advocate either for or against the establishment of a federal law against domestic terrorism, a discussion regarding the possibility of doing so is likely to occur as domestic mass casualty incidents continue to take place. Although domestic terrorism is not captured in federal law, the acts of murder and attempted murder are considered crimes in every state in the United States, punishable by prison or death, though some states have enacted supplemental hate crime laws.²¹⁰ However, the lack of consistency from state to state has led to misunderstandings of hate crime because of the absence of specific laws, or enhancers, for the crime.²¹¹ For example, without a legal enhancer available, a swastika painted on a victim's front door could be construed as a simple property crime (destruction of private property) opposed to a threat of violence or intimidation. Some police agencies pursue hate crimes as they would any other serious criminal event (i.e., a report, investigation, follow-up, and victim services provided) while other agencies view the incident as something other than a violent crime. These discrepancies serve as yet another example of the perplexity of extremism and hate crimes when viewed through the lens of law enforcement and the communities they serve. Another difficulty for citizens to grasp was the involvement of the United States Attorney's Office in the CVE program. The DOJ is the chief prosecutor for the United States, prosecuting criminal cases and representing the country in civil law cases. Street-level crime prevention and community building are not the expertise of the DOJ and the United States Attorney's Office. These are best suited for local police agencies with a track record of working collaboratively with community members to identify crime and safety problems, devising solutions to the problems, and using recognized community policing principles.

²¹⁰ Lance Hernandez, "Mayor Takes Stand against Hate Crimes, Sends Message about Trump's Executive Orders on Immigration," ABC Denver, May 25, 2017, <https://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/politics/mayor-takes-stand-against-hate-crimes-sends-message-about-trumps-executive-orders-on-immigration>.

²¹¹ Hauslohner, "Hate Crimes Reports Are Soaring."

C. THE GROWING THREAT OF FAR-RIGHT EXTREMISM

CVE efforts in 2014 made little mention of far-right extremism; rather, all government-funded outreach was directed specifically to Muslim populations in target cities.²¹² This is surprising considering that far-right and neo-Nazi extremism (e.g., bombings, kidnappings, and murders) has a lengthy and violent history in the United States. In Europe and the United States, far-right extremism and associated acts of violence are growing at a rate that is outpacing other forms of violent extremism.²¹³ As these rates continue to increase, it is important for all communities to know that police are aware of the extremism problem and have preventative efforts in place—with community involvement and buy-in—to diminish the threat of violence.

U.S. right-wing terrorism has been part of the American framework since the end of the Civil War, when the Ku Klux Klan organized to frighten and prevent black citizens from exercising their basic civil rights and liberties.²¹⁴ The Anti-Defamation League published a comprehensive report on extremist violence perpetrated by far-right groups, chronicling 150 incidents of violence over a 25-year period (1993–2017), including assassinations, bombings, arsons, mass casualty shootings, and kidnappings.²¹⁵ According to this report, right-wing violence has steadily increased, with the largest jump in 2017 at 31 reported attacks that year.²¹⁶ These attacks also involved a variety of weapons, were carried out by lone actors, and were focused primarily on Muslim and Jewish religious institutions (see Figure 7).²¹⁷

²¹² “Countering Violent Extremism: Myths and Facts,” Brennan Center for Justice, November 2015, <https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/analysis/102915%20Final%20CVE%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>.

²¹³ Seth Jones, “The Rise of Far-Right Extremism in the United States,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, November 7, 2018, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/rise-far-right-extremism-united-states>.

²¹⁴ “Ku Klux Klan,” Southern Poverty Law Center, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/ku-klux-klan>.

²¹⁵ Anti-Defamation League, *A Dark and Constant Rage: 25 Years of Right-Wing Terrorism in the United States* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 2017), <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/reports/dark-constant-rage-25-years-of-right-wing-terrorism-in-united-states>.

²¹⁶ Jones, “The Rise of Far-Right Extremism.”

²¹⁷ Jones.

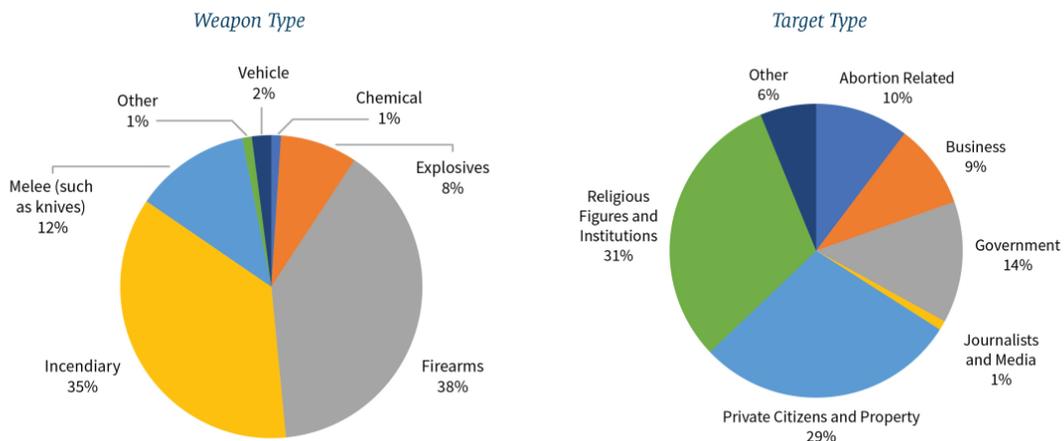


Figure 7. Weapon and Target Type for Right-Wing Attacks, 2007–2017²¹⁸

The focus of federal law enforcement and joint terrorism task forces has traditionally been on Islamic-inspired acts of violence, as opposed to right-wing terrorism, despite evidence that the latter is more prevalent.²¹⁹ As previously discussed, finite resources exist for law enforcement to address the needs of society today. The challenge is to engage and empower the surrounding community to denounce and degrade all forms of extremism that can lead to violence, as opposed to a narrow focus on a population that comprises a small proportion of targeted violence.

D. CONCLUSION

This chapter identified three primary weaknesses of the CVE pilot programs and provides the opportunity for improved administration and performance of future models. With the increase in extremist violence in the United States, police managers and homeland security professionals need to explore solutions—and avoid situations that draw the ire of community groups.

²¹⁸ Source: Jones.

²¹⁹ Jones.

Nonetheless, it is important to validate the efforts put forth by the local CVE teams and examine lessons learned from their experiences. The narrow focus of CVE on Muslim-American communities, a lack of clear definitions and understanding of extremism and domestic terrorism, and the absent community policing platform all contributed to undesirable reactions from diverse community groups and civil rights organizations. These circumstances reinforced the unfavorable launch of CVE and the ultimate instability of the U.S. efforts at addressing ideologically inspired violence.

V. COMMUNITY POLICING IN THE ERA OF TARGETED VIOLENCE

The goals of community policing are clear: crime reduction, improved quality of life in communities, and positive police and citizen interactions.²²⁰ The premise is rooted in the idea that crime reduction and the elimination of fear, which are connected with a general improvement in quality of life, must involve community members and police officers working together. When community members and police work collectively and willingly toward the same goals, they form a partnership and increase the effectiveness and legitimacy of the local police.²²¹ This chapter examines community policing models from two of America's largest police agencies: the NYPD and the LAPD. Both agencies recognize the importance of blending terrorism prevention and extremism awareness into community policing practices. The power of collaboration cannot be overstated, so this chapter serves to challenge American police leaders to envision the results that could be achieved when police and communities unite with complementary goals.

A. A TRANSFORMATION IN POLICING

Traditional policing, which spanned from the 1950s to the 1970s, was primarily reactive in nature and involved a uniformed response to crimes after they occurred.²²² The focus of the traditional police officer was constricted, placing emphasis on the crime and suspect and involving only limited interactions with the community on matters other than crime.²²³ Methods to prevent crime and disorder were limited, and officers had little discretion in decision making, as command and control among the ranks were clearly established, and procedures were closely followed with no community involvement or participation.²²⁴

²²⁰ Police Executive Research Forum, *Community Policing*.

²²¹ Police Executive Research Forum.

²²² Greene, "Community Policing in America."

²²³ Greene.

²²⁴ Greene.

Community policing takes a fundamentally different approach and involves police officers and citizens interacting before a crime occurs on a variety of issues, some of which have nothing to do with crime.²²⁵ The partnership focuses on proactive community building around issues concerning quality of life, fear, and disorder, and community members are engaged with police and help to define the problems that concern them most—precisely why it is a better approach for future CVE programs.²²⁶ Police officers engaged in community policing recognize their accountability to the public and have a broad focus on issues, viewing citizens as participators in the problem-solving process.²²⁷ Interactions with the public take place on street corners, coffee shops, recreation centers, and other public venues, with a slant toward positive, face-to-face communication and relationship building.

When enforcement action is necessary, the community supports the laws and expects them to be enforced.²²⁸ Predetermined, automatic enforcement of laws is viewed as a negative aspect, tearing down layers of trust that have been developed with positive interactions.²²⁹ When the police enforce laws and implement crime and safety programs without community input, the outcome is inconsistent with community policing strategies and inherently harmful to the police and the community.²³⁰ Previous chapters exposed the disconnect between the police and community during the design and implementation of CVE programs. Community members felt as if CVE was being imposed on them without the necessary community input.

²²⁵ Greene.

²²⁶ Police Executive Research Forum, *Community Policing*.

²²⁷ Greene, “Community Policing in America.”

²²⁸ President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, *Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing* (Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, May 2015), https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf.

²²⁹ President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing.

²³⁰ President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing.

B. NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

The NYPD is charged with providing police services to the largest and most densely populated city in the United States.²³¹ Comprised of five distinct boroughs—Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan, Bronx, and Staten Island—and with over 800 different languages spoken among the population, the city is one of the most multicultural and diverse population centers in the world.²³² However, New York City has also been subject to numerous acts of terrorism throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, including bombings, shootings, stabbings, and motor vehicle assaults—and, of course, the Al-Qaeda-inspired aircraft hijackings on September 11, 2001, which killed nearly 3,000 in the streets of lower Manhattan.²³³ With the city being the target of dozens of deadly, ideologically motivated attacks, the NYPD has relied on policing strategies that create positive collaboration with community members as a method to disrupt and prevent crime.

1. Community Specialists

The NYPD's community-led policing model was first established in 1990 with the Community Police Officer on Patrol (C-POP) program. Small teams of “community specialists” were established at the precinct level to perform community engagement functions that had not typically involved patrol officers.²³⁴ The NYPD's command evaluated the effectiveness of C-POP and identified two problems. First, the program created resentment at the line-officer level, with the officers on patrol handling issues and community concerns but not receiving the moniker of “specialists” themselves.²³⁵ Staffing

²³¹ “Population: Current and Future Populations” City of New York, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/planning-level/nyc-population/current-future-populations.page>.

²³² Marcelina Morfin, “The 10 Most Multicultural Cities in the World,” Culture Trip, July 17, 2019, <https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/usa/california/articles/the-10-most-multicultural-cities-in-the-world/>.

²³³ “Terrorist Incident Designation List,” Office for Victims of Crime, accessed December 19, 2019, https://www.ovc.gov/itverp/terrorist_events.html.

²³⁴ Michael White, “The New York City Police Department, Its Crime-Control Strategies and Organizational Changes, 1970–2009” (Tempe: Arizona State University, 2011), <http://johnjay.jjay.cuny.edu/files/White.pdf>.

²³⁵ William J. Bratton, “The NYPD Plan of Action and the Neighborhood Policing Plan” (New York: New York Police Department, June 2015), <http://home.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/home/POA/pdf/Plan-of-Action.pdf>.

the community specialist position was a challenge administratively, with no around-the-clock presence.²³⁶ It was difficult for a small group of community-focused officers, working limited hours, to make a sustained contribution to the problems facing the local community. This was problematic because only a small percentage of officers were engaged in community problem solving, yet community complications occurred around the clock—with or without a “specialist” on duty and available.

The second issue encountered by the NYPD’s command was that community resource officers were ill equipped and unprepared to handle the complex problems they were expected to tackle.²³⁷ They had little to no training on social mediation skills and limited knowledge of the roles of neighborhood organizations and service providers. They became disconnected from the functions and responsibilities of line officers, losing awareness and understanding of the crime-fighting mindset required of first responders.²³⁸ This style of community policing serves as an important backdrop to the more recent NYPD model, which is comprehensive and empowers all officers to be community specialists, from the junior officers walking a beat to the area commander who oversees hundreds of uniformed officers.²³⁹

2. Neighborhood Coordination Officers

The current NYPD neighborhood policing model highlights what is known as neighborhood coordination officers (NCOs), who are assigned in each working area throughout the city and are responsible for monitoring crime trends and providing real-time information to sector patrol officers. They assist in identifying problems, working with sector officers, and supporting the needs of the community and the officers serving them.²⁴⁰

²³⁶ Bratton.

²³⁷ Bratton.

²³⁸ Bratton.

²³⁹ Bratton.

²⁴⁰ “Neighborhood Policing,” New York City Police Department, accessed February 8, 2020, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/bureaus/patrol/neighborhood-coordination-officers.page>.

The NYPD treats the NCO position as a promotion of sorts. Highly motivated officers are selected and trained in key areas within the department that familiarize them with a spectrum of police services including detective training, crime prevention, traffic accident analysis, and public housing–style policing strategies. Armed with knowledge from the bungled attempts of community policing from the 1990s, this program includes training in areas that develop successful strategies for officers working alongside community members: mediation, community-organizing skills, public speaking, crime analysis, and social-service resource training.²⁴¹ Responsiveness to the needs of the community is a hallmark in the study of successful community policing practices, and the NYPD has capitalized on this approach with the NCO program.²⁴²

3. Blending Community Policing and Terrorism Prevention

All NYPD patrol officers who are engaged in community policing are qualified to identify the terrorism indicators they might encounter during patrol functions and community interactions.²⁴³ This method of preparation marks a departure from the past, when only specific officers in specialized units were adequately trained in counterterrorism tactics.²⁴⁴ The strategic changes that embody the current NYPD community policing model are built within the training curriculum and police culture of the NYPD. The key areas that shape the response to all neighborhood safety concerns are crafted around the following five elements:

- **Tactics:** Every neighborhood policing plan is different, shaped and created around the concerns tied to the local community.
- **Technology:** The NYPD uses technology (smartphones and tablets) to connect and alert police officers to events and concerns in the field.
- **Training:** Field training for all new officers is designed to develop the skills needed to manage human encounters and collaborate with citizens to solve problems. Officers are trained on indicators of terrorism and are

²⁴¹ New York City Police Department.

²⁴² Police Executive Research Forum, *Community Policing*, 20.

²⁴³ New York City Police Department, *Patrol Guide*, Section 1 (New York: New York City Police Department, 2019), 378–111, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/about/about-nypd/patrol-guide.page>.

²⁴⁴ Bratton, “The NYPD Plan of Action.”

expected to recognize signs of possible planning and support of terrorist activity.

- **Terrorism:** The NYPD continues to strengthen investigative and enforcement efforts with law enforcement partners at every level to prevent and disrupt acts of terrorism. Every street officer engaged in community policing is instructed on indicators of terrorist activity and issued a street guide for quick reference.
- **Trust:** Officers are encouraged to work with community members in a fair and balanced manner, collaborating to serve the needs of the community.²⁴⁵

The NYPD model calls for moving beyond the prototypical team of community-focused resource officers who attend meetings, promote crime prevention plans, and help civilians with community concerns. Instead, the idea is to empower the patrol officers themselves, the ones handling 9-1-1 radio calls, to engage in meaningful problem-solving activities with the citizens who live, work, and gather in the geographical locations to which the officers are assigned.²⁴⁶ This model was accomplished by merging the functions of patrol with the demands of positive community engagement by creating structural changes in the daily patrol staffing plans throughout the city.²⁴⁷ The expectations of line officers have shifted to include regular follow-up with victims of crime and impromptu or organized meetings with community groups and organizations.²⁴⁸ Adding the responsibility of “problem solver” to the normal tour of duty took time away from other department functions, and the NYPD recognized this. Adjustments were made to accommodate the target of 33 percent of dedicated problem-solving time, or two hours and 20 minutes for every eight-hour shift.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁵ Bratton.

²⁴⁶ Bratton.

²⁴⁷ Bratton.

²⁴⁸ Bratton.

²⁴⁹ New York City Police Department, “Neighborhood Policing.”

4. Community Policing, Terrorism Awareness, and Crime Reduction

The NYPD's NCO program has not only created relationships between police, New York City residents, and business owners; it has also helped to reduce crime in areas throughout the city.²⁵⁰ Commitment from NYPD brass to the NCO program has led to dedicated time for problem solving, more familiarity with local residents within the precinct, and increased communication on matters of crime prevention.²⁵¹ Building trust between the police and communities is a hallmark of community policing, and the NYPD's NCO program has proven to be a vital departmental strategy that engages the police and community in reducing crime and increasing the level of safety.

C. LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT

Los Angeles, the second most populated city in the United States—second only to New York City—is protected and patrolled by the LAPD.²⁵² One of the most diverse cities in the world, Los Angeles is home to citizens from 140 different countries who speak over 220 identifiable languages.²⁵³ It is also the city where law enforcement trends began and American police policy took shape.²⁵⁴ If there is an agency that has weathered the storms and adjusted policy and procedures after numerous high-profile police–community incidents to gain back the community's trust, it is the LAPD.

1. Turbulence in Policing

Special Order #33, written in 1963 and included in the LAPD's operational policy by then–Chief of Police William H. Parker, officially established the Los Angeles Police Community Relations Policy: “The success of a police force in the performance of its

²⁵⁰ Naeisha Rose, “Drop in Crime Attributed to NCO Program: NYPD,” QNS News, May 29, 2018, <https://qns.com/story/2018/05/29/drop-in-crime-attributed-to-nco-program-nypd/>.

²⁵¹ Rose.

²⁵² “The Largest Cities in the US,” World Atlas, accessed February 8, 2020, <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/largest-cities-in-the-united-states.html>.

²⁵³ “Los Angeles, California Population 2019,” World Population Review, accessed January 31, 2020, <http://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/los-angeles-population/>.

²⁵⁴ Police Executive Research Forum, *Future Trends in Policing* (Washington, DC: Police Executive Research Forum, 2014).

duties is largely measured by the degree of support and cooperation it receives from the people it serves.”²⁵⁵

Just two years later, in August 1965, a California Highway Patrol officer stopped an African-American motorist for reckless driving in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles.²⁵⁶ The driver was on parole for robbery, and the roadside contact escalated into a fight with police. Claims of police brutality spread throughout the community, and several days of civil uproar followed. Four thousand members of the California National Guard were deployed to assist 2,000 members of the LAPD on the streets. When the dust settled and the smoke cleared, 600 buildings were destroyed by fire and looting, 3,500 people were arrested, and 34 people were dead.²⁵⁷ The deadly conflict was a watershed moment for the LAPD, resulting in the formal creation of the Community Relations Section and a priority emphasis on community support and open lines of communication with minority groups.²⁵⁸

The Rodney King riots of 1992 and the Rampart scandal in the late 1990s combined to create a further divide—representing fear, mistrust, and discontent—between the police and community that tagged the LAPD as a corrupt, scandalous organization. Former Chief of Police Charlie Beck, who was a sergeant during the 1992 riots, sums it up: “The division between the police and public was palpable: you could feel it, you could feel the hate as you drove down the street.”²⁵⁹

2. Community Engagement from Controversy

What the LAPD has done in the face of these storms is extraordinary. True to form, after each trying occasion, the agency evaluated the circumstances and reshaped its

²⁵⁵ “Community Relationship Division,” Los Angeles Police Department, accessed January 31, 2020, http://www.lapdonline.org/home/content_basic_view/2034.

²⁵⁶ James Queally, “Watts Riots: Traffic Stop Was the Spark That Ignited Days of Destruction in L.A.,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 2015, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-watts-riots-explainer-20150715-htmlstory.html>.

²⁵⁷ Queally.

²⁵⁸ Los Angeles Police Department, “Community Relationship Division.”

²⁵⁹ Zusha Elinson, “The 1992 Riots Changed Policing in L.A., but Some Say Not Enough,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 29, 2017, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-1992-riots-changed-policing-in-l-a-but-some-say-not-enough-1493467200>.

response to community concerns.²⁶⁰ When faced with controversy and assailed as out of touch with its diverse community groups, the department has been quick to transform and admit its missteps to the community, culminating as a model agency from which others may learn.²⁶¹ Community policing is not just about problem solving and collaboration with the community. It is also the most effective method to establish legitimacy between law enforcement and the communities it serves, and over the years, the LAPD has created visible and engaging community policing programs to achieve this objective.²⁶²

3. Community Relationship Division and Police Liaisons

The formal community policing policy of 1963 has evolved and advanced to the current Community Relationship Division within the LAPD.²⁶³ The unit has geographic representation in every neighborhood in the city and follows a branded mission statement that outlines the goals and responsibilities of the unit: creating relationships and building trust in the community. The department achieves these goals through a variety of police–community support and engagement activities, including community clean-up days, community–police advisory teams, and regular crime prevention presentations in every neighborhood.²⁶⁴

Valuable components of the Community Relations Division are community liaison officers (CLOs) and senior lead officers (SLOs), who are similar in substance and style to the NYPD’s NCOs. The LAPD’s CLOs are assigned to each of the 22 operational patrol areas within the city and act as liaisons between residents and the patrol officers assigned to the geographic locations.²⁶⁵ The SLOs work to enhance the relationship with the community by doing two things: engaging in positive interactions with citizens who live,

²⁶⁰ Adam Nagourney, “In Los Angeles, a Police Force Transformed,” *New York Times*, August 12, 2011, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/13/us/13lapd.html>.

²⁶¹ Nagourney.

²⁶² Peyton, Sierra-Arevalo, and Rand, “Community Policing and Police Legitimacy.”

²⁶³ Los Angeles Police Department, “Community Relationship Division.”

²⁶⁴ Los Angeles Police Department.

²⁶⁵ “Quality of Life Issues,” Los Angeles Police Department, accessed January 31, 2020, http://www.lapdonline.org/faqs/content_basic_view/9664.

work, and play within their geographic precinct boundaries and working with citizens to design and promote crime-prevention strategies specific to the challenges within their area.²⁶⁶ SLOs and CLOs engage with diverse community groups, faith-based organizations, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning community. Liaison officers have communication and mediation training and specialize in problem solving and neighborhood collaboration opportunities, involving citizens and community groups in crime-fighting strategies.²⁶⁷ The hand-in-hand efforts of CLOs, SLOs, and Los Angeles citizens working together underscore the foundation of community policing and the byproducts of years of community policing evolution.²⁶⁸ Over time, citizens have taken a stronger position in designing the way police officers conduct day-to-day business. Citizens are participating in the crime-prevention process and have a voice in police department operations. The LAPD views this interaction as a collaborative effort, with genuine concern for the interests of the citizens affected by police operations. That is exactly the kind of *relationship policing* the LAPD has implemented with the liaison program.

4. The Emergence of CVE and Community Policing

The LAPD's Counter-Terrorism and Special Operations Bureau, under the guidance of LAPD Deputy Chief Mike Downing (retired), recognized the value of the liaison officers engaged in community outreach and relationship building and formally connected the liaison program with violent extremism awareness and outreach.²⁶⁹ Liaison officers are empowered to build community relationships that disrupt and defeat violent extremism with undertakings that “fully leverage the Department’s public outreach

²⁶⁶ Los Angeles Police Department, “Community Relationship Division.”

²⁶⁷ “A Closer Look: What Is a Senior Lead Officer?,” *Our Valley News* (blog), May 12, 2017, https://www.paulkrekorian.org/a_closer_look_what_is_a_senior_lead_officer.

²⁶⁸ Peyton, Sierra-Arevalo, and Rand, “Community Policing and Police Legitimacy.”

²⁶⁹ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, *Community Policing to Counter Violent Extremism*.

capability and communications capacity in an effort to improve the quality of life and public safety within diverse communities.”²⁷⁰

Duke University researchers conducted a process evaluation of the LAPD liaison officers engaged in violent extremism work and identified five important community policing practices that have cultivated and advanced CVE:

- Engaging community members and creating open lines of communication
- Building trust with open dialogue on sensitive issues such as terrorism, hate crimes, and discrimination
- Educating community members about violent extremism and how to prevent it
- Problem solving collaboratively with community members to address hate crimes and discrimination, including providing access to social, legal, mental, and physical health concerns
- Mobilizing and promoting civic and public safety engagement from diverse community groups, including women and youth²⁷¹

Perhaps the most important piece of information from the research was linked to the words that have been casually flung about when practitioners and clinicians discuss terrorism prevention: “community resilience.” The study identified that community resilience could not advance if a department did not fully understand the context of the community it was serving.²⁷² Placing community challenges in proper context is vital and helps to establish trust and legitimacy between diverse community groups and police officers. This context for police means recognizing the challenges of being a minority in American society and acknowledging the history of civil rights abuses that have taken a toll on diverse communities in the United States.²⁷³

A separate contextual issue is the need for law enforcement to consider the community’s opposition to CVE and the polarization connected to violent extremism

²⁷⁰ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

²⁷¹ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

²⁷² National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

²⁷³ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

programs in the United States.²⁷⁴ Community groups who participated in the study also revealed a desire to learn more about law enforcement responsibilities, roles, and functions in the community and increase their knowledge of public health resources, including, social, mental, and educational resources.²⁷⁵ The study concluded that community policing “lays the necessary foundation for CVE” and suggested that law enforcement focus on prevention efforts for all forms of hate crime and acts of ideologically inspired violence.

D. CONCLUSION

The research presented in this chapter suggests—and diverse community groups validate—that citizens are genuinely interested in law enforcement matters, and they desire to learn more about the levels of engagement and the authority law enforcement provides to society. Many of the immigrants and refugees in the United States come from countries with political systems and governments that are extremely centralized, leaving citizens with no power, individual freedoms, or representation in local government. Typically, these governments are characterized by extreme control, absolute authority, and censorship. Police managers can substantially improve rapport and develop constructive alliances with community groups if they “open the books” and allow input and consideration in community policing matters. Police officers are in high-trust *human* relationships with the communities they serve, meaning the quality of the relationship is judged in terms of what they receive from it: quality communications, quality associations, quality service, quality information sharing, and quality daily interactions.²⁷⁶ Perhaps community policing is indeed the most equitable and honest approach to create legitimate CVE programs.

²⁷⁴ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

²⁷⁵ National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

²⁷⁶ G. S. Sureshchandar, Chandrasekharan Rajendran, and R. N. Anantharaman, “The Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction—A Factor Specific Approach,” *Journal of Services Marketing* 16, no. 4 (2002), <https://doi.org/10.1108/08876040210433248>.

VI. LEVERAGING THE PUBLIC TO PREVENT VIOLENCE

This thesis has inspected community policing as an equitable and honest method to deter homegrown acts of terrorism and violent extremism. Creating meaningful connections in the community that empower citizens to take responsibility for safety coupled with the desire to willingly collaborate with police is an overarching theme of community policing. This chapter begins with a look at the power of *bystanders* in the community, those “in the know” who have knowledge and receive crucial information about potentially dangerous situations.²⁷⁷ It then transitions to an examination of two promising violence prevention programs that emphasize community ownership and societal solutions as well as opens the door for additional thesis work in the future.

A. COMMUNITY BYSTANDERS

Professionals in the homeland security spectrum must understand the critical role of bystanders within the social network of lone-actor terrorists: the friends (virtual and physical), clergy, school counselors, and close family members who are best suited to recognize an indication or intention to strike in violent fashion. Lone actors are not as covert and cryptic as one might suspect. A 2013 study found that in the overwhelming majority of terrorist attacks, other people in the suspect’s social network were familiar with the ideological grievances and the desire to inflict mass casualty violence.²⁷⁸ Familiarity with the pending violence was present in 82 percent of the 119 lone-actor terrorist events studied, through firsthand knowledge, letters, social media postings, or other signals revealed to the bystander.²⁷⁹

The study drew attention to a second issue that presents bystanders with a serious dilemma: what if they are mistaken about the situation and the person in question is

²⁷⁷ “Bystander Effect,” Psychology Today, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/bystander-effect>.

²⁷⁸ Paul Gill, John Horgan, and Paige Deckert, “Bombing Alone: Tracing the Motivations and Antecedent Behaviors of Lone-Actor Terrorists,” *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 59, no. 2 (March 2013): 425–35, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1556-4029.12312>.

²⁷⁹ Gill, Horgan, and Deckert.

wrongly accused? Bystanders choose to avoid alerting police for two primary reasons: either they do not think the actions or threat is serious enough or they fear they might be wrong, and involving law enforcement would create dire circumstances for the person.²⁸⁰ This is valuable information for homeland security practitioners and indicates the need for non-law enforcement, community-level, secondary prevention systems that provide the bystander an alternate opportunity for consultation that is not directly linked to law enforcement. Examples of secondary prevention systems in Denver, Colorado, and Oakland, California, are discussed in the following sections. With knowledge of non-law enforcement, multi-disciplinary off-ramp options, the bystander has a choice other than law enforcement, thus alleviating the fear and stigma of false accusation.

B. VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN COLORADO

Denver, Colorado, known as the “Mile High City,” is located just east of the Rocky Mountains at an elevation of 5,280 feet.²⁸¹ One of the fastest growing major cities in the United States, Denver and the surrounding metropolitan area have also been home to numerous acts of mass casualty and ideologically inspired violence, including mass shootings, bombings, arsons, and attempts from several citizens to travel to Syria to join ISIS.²⁸²

1. Colorado Resilience Collaborative

Community-based intervention teams that work to prevent violence are proven tools that require localized consideration.²⁸³ The answer to violent extremism for the Denver metropolitan area is the Colorado Resilience Collaborative (CRC), housed within

²⁸⁰ Williams, Horgan, and Evans, “The Critical Role of Friends in Networks.”

²⁸¹ “Denver, Colorado,” Uncover Colorado, accessed January 31, 2020, <https://www.uncovercolorado.com/towns/denver/>.

²⁸² “Man Arrested for Allegedly Plotting to Blow up Federal Buildings in Denver,” Free Republic, March 8, 2003, <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/860194/posts>; “Walter Bond Sentenced to Federal Prison for the Arson at the Sheepskin Factory in Glendale,” United States Attorney’s Office, District of Colorado, February 11, 2011, <https://www.fbi.gov/denver/press-releases/2011/dn021111.htm>; Hayes, “Colorado Teen Who Tried to Wage Jihad”; Fieldstadt, “Shooter Joked about School Shootings.”

²⁸³ “Cure Violence (Previously the Chicago Project for Violence Prevention),” Violence Prevention Alliance, accessed February 8, 2020, https://www.who.int/violenceprevention/about/participants/cure_violence/en/.

the Graduate School of Professional Psychology at the University of Denver. The CRC is designed to provide support to victims of ideologically inspired violence and community resources to those who are vulnerable or receptive to committing potential violence.²⁸⁴ The CRC uses a three-pronged approach consisting of research, education, and consultation for those affected by extremism.

The University of Denver and CRC are important elements of CVE-trained Denver police officers, who treat all forms of violent extremism as they would any other violent crime.²⁸⁵ Denver officers are trained to merge proactive community policing and collaboration with the community for solutions to extremist violence. Training incorporates cultural awareness, partnerships with diverse community members, and the importance of respectful and fair interactions at all times.²⁸⁶ Officers are familiarized with the CRC and the violent extremism consultations and educational assistance it provides to the community and are encouraged to integrate CRC services in every hate crime investigation and extremist encounter. The CRC looks to prevent and disrupt identity-based violence by providing services to those who might be engaged or absorbed in an extremist ideology while simultaneously supporting victims of ideologically inspired crime.²⁸⁷

2. All-Inclusive Community Approach

The CRC uses a socioecological method toward ideologically inspired violence, examining the complexities of society and adapting an inclusive, whole-of-community technique to disrupt and prevent violence.²⁸⁸ Local, regional, and national partners work as a united front to provide support and education to community groups, policymakers, and public and private institutions about the dangers of extremism. The CRC's expertise comes from within the surrounding community and includes faith groups, mental health partners,

²⁸⁴ University of Denver, "Colorado Resilience Collaborative."

²⁸⁵ Anthony Cotton, "Denver Police Receive Federal Grant to Combat Violent Extremism," Colorado Public Radio, August 17, 2017, <https://www.cpr.org/show-segment/denver-police-receive-federal-grant-to-combat-violent-extremism/>.

²⁸⁶ Cotton.

²⁸⁷ University of Denver, "Colorado Resilience Collaborative."

²⁸⁸ University of Denver.

social services, and law enforcement: the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Interfaith Alliance of Colorado, Anti-Defamation League, Colorado Department of Human Services, Denver Islamic Society, local mental health professionals, and Denver Police Department. Figure 8 depicts how community organizations under the CRC work together toward the common goal of CVE.



Figure 8. Communication among CRC Participants

The CRC gathers on a regular basis, engaging participants and bringing support services to light. Consultations are offered to those worried about someone who might be on a path to violence, those who have survived or witnessed violence, those experiencing trauma from violence, or those simply wanting to learn more about the psychosocial factors involved in identity-based violence.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁹ University of Denver.

C. OAKLAND CEASEFIRE PARTNERSHIP

Dubbed one of the most dangerous cities in America, Oakland has struggled to control violent, gang-related street crime for nearly a decade.²⁹⁰ Community members and law enforcement have recently adopted a promising violence prevention program known as the Ceasefire Partnership, which incorporates a community-level, multi-discipline, public health approach to preventing violent crime.

The plan involves treating violent crime with behavioral change methods, community solutions, and multi-sector involvement from a variety of local service providers, including street-level intervention teams.²⁹¹ The highlight of the model is the intervention team concept, comprising trusted community members, some of whom are formerly incarcerated gang members, who work alongside law enforcement to intervene, persuading and educating the vulnerable population about violence within the community, offering resources and guidance before and after a murder or serious assault occurs.²⁹²

Faith leaders, mental health experts, and law enforcement members accompany the teams during street visits, and all are trained on sensitivity, positive dialogue, and two-way, compassionate communication techniques. The teams respond to the scenes of violent crimes, contact neighbors and affected family members, and attempt to cool emotions and quell retaliation, mediating and calming individuals affected by the violence.²⁹³ They also participate in neighborhood walks, and one-on-one house visits with the individuals of concern.²⁹⁴

The executive level of the Oakland Police Department has made Ceasefire a priority. Resources were realigned, and the department created the Ceasefire Section, comprised of officers who track and examine shooting and violence data and create special

²⁹⁰ Rebecca Edwards, “10 Safest & Most Dangerous Metro Cities in America,” Safewise, April 22, 2019, <https://www.safewise.com/blog/safest-metro-cities/>.

²⁹¹ Violence Prevention Alliance, “Cure Violence.”

²⁹² Violence Prevention Alliance.

²⁹³ Mike McLively and Brittany Nieto, *A Case Study in Hope: Lessons from Oakland’s Remarkable Reduction in Gun Violence* (San Francisco: Giffords Law Center, April 2019), 107.

²⁹⁴ McLively and Nieto, 41.

daily reports for street-level officers about the activity occurring in every neighborhood.²⁹⁵ Officers are trained in cultural awareness, which includes Oakland’s history of policing and race relations, and are empowered to engage the community positively in focused neighborhoods. This preventative, community-oriented approach has cut homicides and gun crime incidents by nearly half; see Figure 9.²⁹⁶



Figure 9. Oakland’s Reduction in Gun Violence, 2009–2018²⁹⁷

D. CONCLUSION

Terrorism prevention efforts commonly involve a variety of law enforcement entities in the United States, including federal, state, and local government partners, but perhaps the single most important presence who can deter an act of mass casualty violence is the individual community member existing within our neighborhoods. He or she is the coach, teacher, colleague, next door neighbor, social service provider, or religious leader in the community. It is the responsibility of law enforcement to look for creative ways to engage and empower the informal leaders within every community, including reformed

²⁹⁵ McLively and Nieto, 50.

²⁹⁶ McLively and Nieto, 30.

²⁹⁷ Source: McLively and Nieto, 64.

offenders, and acknowledge that these are the individuals who will be the first to recognize a behavioral change or explicit desire to inflict mass casualty violence. The community programs in Denver and Oakland illustrate the positive application of available, diverse, multi-disciplinary community partners and present an intervention alternative to law enforcement. Hopefully, this chapter has encouraged law enforcement practitioners to examine the fusion of public health and law enforcement meanwhile highlighting the value of community policing to prevent violent extremism.

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VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The unification of CVE and community policing presents genuine opportunities for law enforcement leaders across the country. As the statistics have shown, hate crimes and ideologically inspired mass casualty violence are on the rise in the United States. Communities have high expectations of American police departments and presume they are prepared to stop this kind of violence, but the reality is police cannot prevent mass casualty and hate-inspired violence without the assistance and support of the communities around them.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS

Community police officers are front-line defenders against acts of terrorism, and all acts of terror occur at the local level. This thesis identifies the following recommendations for police agencies, intended to bolster the effectiveness of CVE as a terrorism prevention tool.

1. Language Matters

Abandon the phrase “countering violent extremism” and adopt language that verifies and displays a whole-of-community, all-inclusive, violence prevention approach. CVE terminology was a driving factor in alienating Muslim community groups and contributed to deficient police and community cohesion. Framing crime prevention initiatives around issues that protect and safeguard all citizens from violence resonates with community members and is the preferred approach to building trust and alliances between police and communities.²⁹⁸ Communicating with clarity and transparency with diverse community groups prevents the possibility of misinformation and restricts what could be interpreted as deception on the part of law enforcement. Thoughtful and intentional consideration of the words the police use influences the environment around them and can either alienate citizens from police or band them together.

²⁹⁸ “Importance of Police-Community Relationships and Resources for Further Reading,” Department of Justice, 2016, <https://www.justice.gov/crs/file/836486/download>.

2. Problem-Solving Approach

Empower all front-line police officers to be collaborative problem solvers, trained in community-level outreach and engagement. This should include communication-based training that emphasizes problem solving, helpful community resources, dispute mediation, and social interaction skills. Police officers and community members who unite to solve problems represent the very heart and soul of community policing. This is especially relevant with immigrant and refugee community groups who are leery of law enforcement because of negative experiences in their homeland. Promoting civic engagement and creating opportunities to work with police to improve safety is critical to the success of any local government. The application of community policing principles and terrorism prevention awareness, at the grass roots level, leads to more than increased collaboration and neighborhood coordination. It leverages the community and police to work together to address community grievances and concerns that could lead to an act of violence.

3. Citizen Involvement

Cultivate citizen involvement with the violent extremism program's design, training, and application with respected community members and local organizations. This input is powerful and allows local community members to have an influence on matters that concern them most while providing the exclusive opportunity to train the men and women of the local police department.

Become aware of the diverse populations, including immigrant and refugees within the jurisdiction, and provide bias-motivated and hate-crime training to these groups. Diverse community groups are potential targets for extremists, and they should have knowledge of all forms of violent extremist activity, including an understanding of how extremism presents itself in the community, and the police response when an incident occurs.

4. Education and Awareness

Violent crimes and acts of terrorism occur locally, and community police officers need to be equipped with resources about terrorism awareness and suspicious activities.

Hate-crime and violent-extremism awareness training for all front-line members of the police agency should be a priority. Numerous low-cost or free trainings are offered by the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, International Association of Chiefs of Police, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and DHS. Topics should include local case studies, Moghaddam’s “staircase to terrorism” theory, extremist recruiting techniques, drivers of radicalization to violence (e.g., ideological, political, social, group, or community), and the power of social identity and group influencers. Enrich violent-extremism curriculum with meaningful cultural awareness training for all officers. Topics should include treating people in the intercultural environment fairly and respectfully as well as understanding common religious practices and important holiday rituals and surrounding activities. This builds trust and creates cohesion between police and the diverse communities they serve.

Law enforcement agencies should strive to demystify common police practices, and investigation strategies while emphasizing the protection of civil rights and civil liberties for all citizens. This transparency can emerge with one-on-one meetings, social media platforms, and organized community meetings. Police managers can enhance the capacity of community safety briefings by combining violent-extremism training with existing city trainings and outreach activities. The Denver Police Department’s CVE program involves a “My City Academy” that educates immigrant and refugee citizens about the roles of common city agencies (e.g., public health, water, street maintenance, public libraries, transportation, and schools) and the full spectrum of public safety services that are available to all members of the community.²⁹⁹

5. Organizational Support

Commitment from top law enforcement leadership is a cornerstone of effective community policing implementation. The NYPD’s and LAPD’s executive staff recognize the value of remodeling community policing techniques while consolidating terrorism prevention awareness with front-line officers. Prioritizing hate-crime and extremist-related

²⁹⁹ Cotton, “Denver Police Receive Federal Grant.”

violence prevention strategies to improve public safety will ensure finite resources are aligned properly to mitigate the threat of hate crimes and mass casualty violence. This focus positively influences the perception of police within diverse community groups and builds trust between the police and groups who suffer from acts of hate.

Police managers should seek a dedicated, non-sworn community member to represent the CVE program. As this thesis has highlighted, a primary sticking point of CVE has been the lack of community input and control. The progressive use of civilian oversight for contentious police programming has increased the efficiency and effectiveness of police while creating favorable levels of transparency, and the same consideration should be given to CVE.

Violent-extremism programming and the community-focused outreach connected with it should be separate and disconnected from police intelligence collection units. Community police officers should be restricted from participating in intelligence investigations. Policies concerning intelligence collection should be clear and readily available to the community. The initial concern of spying, surveillance, and solicitation of community informants was a near fatal complication for the future of CVE, so police managers must be transparent in separating violence prevention work from intelligence collection and criminal investigation units.

B. FINAL OUTCOME

The American law enforcement profession has drawn tremendous strength and capabilities when partnering and collaborating with local-level community members. There is no conclusive declaration that CVE will not prosper if intentionally connected with comprehensive community policing strategies. The recommendations outlined above offer a path forward that promotes integration, transparency, respect, and opportunities between police and communities that can mitigate mass casualty violence inspired by radicalization and hate-filled ideologies.

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