

Psychological issues in understanding terrorism and the response to terrorism

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In press in Christopher Stout (Ed.), *The Psychology of Terrorism*, Greenwood Publishing.

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This chapter begins with a brief effort to put modern terrorism in context. Thereafter, the chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section deals with psychological issues involved in understanding the perpetrators of terrorism, including their motivations and strategies. The second section deals with the U.S. response to terrorism, including issues of fear and identity shift in reaction to the events of September 11, 2001. I cannot offer a full review of the literature related to even one of these issues, and for some issues there is so little relevant literature that I can only point in the general directions that research might take. In using a very broad brush, I need to apologize in advance to scholars whose knowledge and contributions are not adequately represented here. A little theory can be a dangerous thing, especially in the hands of a non-specialist in the relevant theory. But the events of 9/11 warrant some additional risk-taking in connecting psychological research to understanding of the origins and effects of terrorism.

Terrorism as a category of violence

Violence and the threat of violence to control people is an idea older than history, but the use of the word *terror* to refer to political violence goes back only to the French Revolution of the 1790s. The revolutionaries, threatened by resistance within France and foreign armies at French borders, undertook a Reign of Terror to suppress the enemy within. This first violence to be called terrorism had the power of the state behind it. Terrorism today is usually associated with political violence perpetrated by groups without the power of the state. Few of these non-state groups have referred to themselves as terrorists, although prominent exceptions include the Russian Narodnaya Volya in the late 1800s and the Zionist Stern Gang of the late 1940s. Most non-state terrorists see themselves as revolutionaries or freedom fighters.

State terrorism was not only first, it continues to be more dangerous. Rummel (1996) estimates 170 million people killed by government in the 20th century, not including 34 million

dead in battle. Most of the civilian victims were killed by their own government, or, more precisely, by the government controlling the area in which the victims were living. Stalin, Mao, and Hitler were the biggest killers (42 million, 37 million, 20 million killed), with Pol Pot's killing of 2 million Cambodians coming in only 7th in the pantheon of killers. By comparison, killing by non-state groups is miniscule. Rummel estimates 500,000 killed in the 20th century by terrorists, guerillas, and other non-state groups. State terrorism is thus greater by a ratio of about 260 to 1. Worldwide, Myers (2001) counts 2,527 deaths from terrorism in all of the 1990s. Three thousand terrorist victims on September 11th is thus a big increment in the killing done by terrorists, but does not change the scale of the comparison: state terrorism is by far the greater danger.

Despite the origin of the term terrorism in reference to state terror, and despite the pre-eminence of state terror in relation to non-state terror, terrorism today is usually understood to mean non-state terrorism. Non-state terrorism includes both anti-state terror and vigilante terror, but it is usually anti-state terrorism that is the focus of attention—violence against recognized states by small groups without the power of a state. Most definitions of anti-state terrorism also include the idea of violence against non-combatants, especially women and children, although the suicide bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in 1984 is often referred to as terrorism, as is the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon.

Anti-state terrorism cannot be understood outside the context of state terrorism. Compared with the 19th century, the 20th century saw massive increases in state power. The modern state reaches deeper into the lives of citizens than ever before. It collects more in taxes, and its regulations, rewards, and punishments push further into work, school, and neighborhood. The state culture is thus ever harder to resist; any culture group that does not control a state is likely to feel in danger of extinction. But resistance to state culture faces state power that continues to grow. It is in the context of growing state power that anti-state terrorists can feel increasingly desperate.

Much has been written about how to define anti-state terrorism, but I generally agree with those who say the difference between a terrorist and a freedom fighter is mostly in the politics of the beholder (see McCauley, 1991, and McCauley, in press b, for more on this issue). The psychological question is how members of a small group without the power of a state become capable of political violence that includes violence against non-combatants. In the remainder of this chapter I follow common usage in referring to anti-state terrorism simply as “terrorism.”

Terrorist Motivations

Individuals become terrorists in many different ways and for many different reasons. Here I will simplify to consider three kinds of explanation of the 9/11 attacks: they are crazy, they are crazed by hatred and anger, or they are rational within their own perspective. My argument is that terrorism is not to be understood as pathology, and that terrorists emerge out of a normal psychology of emotional commitment to cause and comrades.

Terrorism as individual pathology

A common suggestion is that there must be something wrong with terrorists. Terrorists must be crazy, or suicidal, or psychopaths without moral feelings. Only someone with something wrong with him could do the cold-blooded killing that a terrorist does.

The search for pathology. Thirty years ago this suggestion was taken very seriously, but thirty years of research has found little evidence that terrorists are suffering from psychopathology. This research has profited by what now amount to hundreds of interviews with terrorists. Some terrorists are captured and interviewed in prison. Some active terrorists can be found in their home neighborhoods, if the interviewer knows where to look. And some retired terrorists are willing to talk about their earlier activities, particularly if these activities were successful. Itzhak Shamir and Menachem Begin, for instance, moved from anti-Arab and anti-British terrorism to leadership of the state of Israel. Interviews with terrorists rarely find any disorder listed in the DSM.

More systematic research confirms the interview results. Particularly thorough were the German studies of the Baader-Meinhof Gang. Although the terrorists had gone underground and their locations were unknown, their identities were known. Excellent German records provided a great deal of information about each individual. Pre-natal records, peri-natal records, pediatric records, pre-school records, lower-school records, grade-school records, high-school records, university records (most had had some university education)—all of these were combed for clues to understanding these individuals. Family, neighbors, schoolmates—all those who had known an individual before the leap to terrorism—were interviewed. A comparison sample of individuals from the same neighborhoods, matched for gender, age, and socio-economic status, was similarly studied. The results of these investigations take several feet of shelf space, but are easy to summarize. The terrorists did not differ from the comparison group of non-terrorists in any substantial way; in particular, the terrorists did not show higher rates of any kind of psychopathology.

Terrorists as psychopaths. Some have suggested that terrorists are *antisocial personalities* or *psychopaths*. Psychopaths can be intelligent and very much in contact with reality; their problem is that they are socially and morally deficient. They are law-breakers, deceitful, aggressive, and reckless in disregarding the safety of self and others. They do not feel remorse for hurting others. As some individuals cannot see color, psychopaths cannot feel empathy or affection for others.

Explaining terrorism as the work of psychopaths brings a new difficulty, however. The 9/11 attackers were willing to give their lives in the attack. So far as I am aware, no one has ever suggested that a psychopath's moral blindness can take the form of self-sacrifice. In addition, psychopaths are notably impulsive and irresponsible. The mutual commitment and trust evident within each of the four groups of attackers, and in the cooperation between groups, is radically inconsistent with the psychopathic personality.

It is possible that a terrorist group might recruit a psychopath for a particular mission, if the mission requires inflicting pain or death without the distraction of sympathy for the victims, but the mission would have to be a one-person job, something that requires little or no coordination and trust. And the mission would have to offer a reasonable chance of success without suicide.

The case against pathology. Of course there are occasional lone bombers or lone gunmen who kill for political causes, and such individuals may indeed suffer from some form of psychopathology. A loner like Theodore Kaczynski, the “Unabomber”, sending out letter bombs in occasional forays from his wilderness cabin, may suffer from psychopathology. But terrorists operating in groups, especially groups that can organize attacks that are successful, are very unlikely to suffer from serious psychopathology.

Indeed terrorism would be a trivial problem if only those with some kind of psychopathology could be terrorists. Rather we have to face the fact that normal people can be terrorists, that we are ourselves capable of terrorist acts under some circumstances. This fact is already implied in recognizing that military and police forces involved in state terrorism are all too capable of killing non-combatants. Few would suggest that the broad range of soldiers and policemen involved in such killing must all be suffering some kind of psychopathology. .

Terrorism as Emotional Expression

When asked at a press conference on October 11, 2001 why people in the Muslim world hate the US, President Bush expressed amazement and replied, “That’s because they don’t

President Bush is not the only one to accept the idea that the 9/11 attacks were an expression of hatred. “Why do they hate us?” has been the headline of numerous stories and editorials in newspapers and magazines. Despite the headlines, there has been little analysis of what hatred means or where it may come from.

Hatred and anger The surprising fact is that, although a few psychoanalysts have discussed hatred, there is very little psychological research focused on hate or hatred. Gordon Allport (1954) offered brief mention of hatred in writing about *The Nature of Prejudice*, and more recently Marilyn Brewer (2001) has asked “When does ingroup love become outgroup hate?” But empirical research on hatred, particularly research that distinguishes hatred from anger, is notably absent. In contrast, there is a large and well-developed research literature on the emotion of anger. Does hatred mean anything more than strong anger? An example suggests that hatred may be different. A parent can be angry with a misbehaving child, angry to the point of striking the child. But even caught up in that violence, the parent would not hate the child.

A few differences between anger and hatred show up in the way these words are used in everyday speech. Anger is hot, hatred can be cold. Anger is a response to a particular incident or offense; hatred expresses a longer-term relation of antipathy. We sometimes talk about hatred when we mean only strong dislike, as in “I hate broccoli”, but even in this usage there is the sense of a long-term unwavering dislike, a dislike without exceptions, and perhaps even the wish that broccoli should be wiped from every menu.

In *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, Donald Horowitz offers a distinction between anger and hatred that is consistent with the language just considered. Horowitz (2001, p. 543) quotes Aristotle as follows: “The angry man wants the object of his anger to suffer in return; hatred wishes its object not to exist.” This distinction begs for a parallel distinction in offenders or offenses, a distinction that can predict when an offense leads to anger and when to hatred. One possibility (see also Brewer, 2001) is that an offense that includes long-term threat is more likely to elicit the desire to eliminate the offender. The emotional reaction to threat is fear. Thus hatred may be a compound of anger and fear, such that anger alone aims to punish whereas hatred aims to obliterate the threat. If hatred is related to anger, then research on anger may be able to help us understand the behavior of terrorists.

The psychology of anger. Explanation of terrorism as the work of people blinded by anger is at least generally consistent with what is known about the emotion of anger. In particular, there is reason to believe that anger does get in the way of judgment. In *Passions within Reason*, Robert Frank (1988) argues that blindness to self-interest is the evolutionary key to anger. If each individual acted rationally on self-interest, the strong could do anything they wanted to the weak. Both would realize that weaker cannot win and the weaker would always defer to the stronger. But anger can lead the weaker to attack the stronger despite the objective balance of forces. The stronger will win, but he will suffer some costs along the way and the possibility of these costs restrains the demands of the stronger.

This perspective suggests an evolutionary advantage for individuals for whom anger can conquer fear. The result should be a gradual increase in the proportion of individuals who are capable of anger. Everyday experience suggests that most people are capable of anger under the right circumstances. What are those circumstances, that is, what are the elicitors of anger?

There are basically two theories of anger (Sabini, 1995, pp. 411-428). The first, which comes to us from Aristotle, says that anger is the emotional reaction to insult—an offense in which the respect or status due to an individual is violated. The second, which emerged from experimental research with animals, says that anger is the emotional reaction to pain, especially the pain of frustration. Frustration is understood as the failure to receive an expected reward. These theories obviously have a great deal in common. Respect expected but not forthcoming is a painful frustration. For our purposes, the two theories differ chiefly in their emphasis on material welfare. Insult is subjective, a social , whereas at least some interpretations of frustration include objective poverty and powerlessness as frustrations that can lead to anger. This interpretation of frustration-aggression theory was popular at the 2002 World Economic Forum, where material deprivation was cited by many luminaries as the cause or at least an important cause of violence aimed at the West (Friedman, 2002a).

Individual frustration and insult. The immediate difficulty of seeing the 9/11 terrorists as crazed with anger is the fact, much cited by journalists and pundits, that the 9/11 terrorists were not obviously suffering from frustration or insult. Mohammed Atta came from a middle-class family in Egypt, studied architecture in Cairo, traveled to Hamburg, Germany for further studies in architecture, and had a part-time job doing architectural drawings for a German firm. His German thesis, on the ancient architecture of Aleppo, was well received. According to Thomas Friedman's (2002b) inquiries, several others of the 9/11 pilot-leaders came from similar middle class backgrounds with similar threads of personal success.

The origins of the 9/11 terrorist-leaders are thus strikingly different from the origins of the Palestinian suicide terrorists that Ariel Merari has been studying for decades in Israel (Lelyveld, 2001). The Palestinian terrorists are young, male, poor and uneducated. Their motivations are manifold but notably include the several thousand dollars awarded to the family of a Palestinian martyr. The amount is small by Western standards but enough to lift a Palestinian family out of abject poverty, including support for parents and aged relatives and a dowry for the martyr's sisters. It is easy to characterize these suicide terrorists as frustrated by poverty and hopelessness, with frustration leading to anger against Israel as the perceived source of their problems.

But this explanation does not fit at least the leaders of the 9/11 terrorists. Whence their anger, if anger is the explanation of their attacks? Perhaps they are angry, not about their own personal experience of frustration and insult, but about the frustrations and insults experienced by their group.

Group frustration and insult. In the *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Kinder (1998) summarizes the accumulated evidence that political opinions are only weakly predicted by narrow self-interest and more strongly predicted by group interest. The poor do not support welfare policies more than others, young males are not less in favor of war than others, parents of school-age children are not more opposed than others to busing for desegregation. Rather it

is group interest that is the useful predictor. Sympathy for the poor predicts favoring increased welfare. Sympathy for African-Americans predicts support for busing and other desegregation policies. Unless individual self-interest is exceptionally large and clear cut, voters' opinions are not self-centered but group centered.

Similarly, Kinder recounts evidence that political action, including protest and confrontation, is motivated more by identification with group interest than by self interest. "Thus participation of black college students in the civil rights movement in the American South in the 1960s was predicted better by their anger over society's treatment of black Americans in general than by any discontent they felt about their own lives... Thus white working-class participants in the Boston antibusing movement were motivated especially by their resentments about the gains of blacks and professionals, and less by their own personal troubles..." (Kinder, 1998, p. 831).

Group identification makes sense of sacrifice from individuals who are not personally frustrated or insulted. The mistake is to imagine that self-sacrifice must come from personal problems, rather than identification with group problems. This mistake rests in ignorance of the fact that many post-WWII terrorists have been individuals of middle-class origins, people with options. The Baader-Meinhoff Gang in Germany, the Red Brigade in Italy, the Weather Underground in the U.S.—these and many other post-WWII terrorist groups are made up mostly of individuals with middle-class origins and middle-class skills honed by at least some university education (McCauley & Segal, 1987). Explaining self-sacrifice as a result of personal problems is no more persuasive for terrorists than for Mother Theresa or U.S. Medal of Honor winners.

The power of group identification is thus the foundation of intergroup conflict, especially for large groups where individual self-interest is probably maximized by free-riding, that is, by letting other group members pay the costs of advancing group welfare that the individual will profit from. Here I am asserting briefly what I elsewhere argue for in more detail (McCauley, 2001; McCauley, in press a).

The explanation of terrorist sacrifice as a fit of anger overcoming self-interest can now be reformulated in terms of anger over group insult and group frustration. The potential origins of such anger are not difficult to discern.

Insult and frustration as seen by Muslims (and others). From Morocco to Pakistan lies a belt of Muslim states in which governments have police and military power but little public support. The gulf between rich and poor is deep and wide in these countries, and government is associated with Western-leaning elites for whom government, not private enterprise, is the source of wealth. Political threat to the state is not tolerated; imprisonment, torture and death are the tools of the state against political opposition. As the Catholic Church in Poland under Communism came to be the principal refuge of political opposition, so fundamentalist Muslim mosques are the principal refuge of political opposition to government in these states.

In this conflict between Muslim governments and Muslim peoples, the U.S. and other Western countries have supported the governments. When the Algerian government was about to lose an election to Islamic Salvation Front in 1992, the government annulled the election and Europeans and Americans were glad to accept the lesser of two evils. Western countries have supported authoritarian governments of Egypt, Jordan, and Pakistan with credits and military assistance. U.S. support for Israel against the Palestinians is only one part of this pattern of supporting power against people.

Al Qaeda is an association of exiles and refugees from the political violence going on in Muslim countries. Long before declaring jihad against the U.S., Bin Laden was attacking the house of Saud for letting U.S. troops remain in the holy land of Mecca and Medina after the Gulf War. Fifteen of the 9/11 terrorists came originally from Saudi Arabia, although most seem to have been recruited from the Muslim diaspora in Europe. The U.S. has become a target because it is seen as supporting the governments that created the diaspora. The U.S. is in the position of someone who has stumbled into a family feud. If this scenario seems strained, consider the parallel between Muslims declaring jihad on the U.S for supporting state terrorism

in Muslim countries, and the U.S. declaring war on any country that supports terrorism against the U.S.

It is important to recognize that it is not only Arab and Muslim countries in which U.S. policies are seen as responsible for terrorist attacks against the U.S. In an IHT/Pew poll of 275 “opinion-makers” in 24 countries, respondents were asked how many ordinary people think that U.S. policies and actions in the world were a major cause of the 9/11 attack (Knowlton, 2001). In the U.S. only 18 percent of respondents said many people think this; in 23 other countries an average of 58 percent said most or many people think this. In Islamic countries 76 percent said most or many think this, and even in Western European countries 36 percent said most or many think this. Americans do not have to accept the judgments of other countries, but will have to deal with them.

Anger or love? If group identification can lead to anger for frustrations and insults suffered by the group, it yet remains to be determined if there is any evidence of such emotions in the 9/11 terrorists. Our best guide to the motives of those who carried out the attacks of 9/11 is the document found in the luggage of several of the attackers. Four of the five pages of this document have been released by the FBI and these pages have been translated and interpreted by Makiya and Mneimneh (2002). I am indebted to Hassan Mneimneh for his assistance in understanding this document.

The four pages are surprising for what they do not contain. There is no list of group frustrations and insults, no litany of injustice to justify violence. “The sense throughout is that the would-be martyr is engaged in his action solely to please God. There is no mention of any communal purpose behind his behavior. In all of the four pages available to us there is not a word or an implication about any wrongs that are to be redressed through martyrdom, whether in Palestine or Iraq or in ‘the land of Muhammad,’ the phrase bin Laden used in the al-Jazeera video that was shown after September 11” (Makiya and Mneimneh, 2002, p.21). Indeed the text cites approvingly a story from the Hadith, the collection of sayings and actions attributed to the

Prophet and his companions, about Ali ibn Abi Talib, cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, who is spat upon by an infidel in combat. The Muslim holds his sword until he can master the impulse for vengeance—an individual and human motive—and strikes only when he can strike for the sake of God.

Rather than anger or hatred, the dominant message of the text is a focus on the eternal. There are many references to the Koran, and the vocabulary departs from seventh century Arabic only for a few references to modern concepts such as airport and plane (and these modern words are reduced to one-letter abbreviations). To feel connection with God and the work of God, to feel the peace of submission to God's will—these are the imperatives and the promises of the text. Invocations and prayers are to be offered at every stage of the journey: the last night, the journey to the airport, boarding the plane, takeoff, taking the plane, welcoming death. The reader is reminded that fear is an act of worship due only to God. If killing is necessary, the language of the text makes the killing a ritual slaughter with vocabulary that refers to animal sacrifice, including the sacrifice of Isaac that Abraham was prepared to offer.

Judging from this text, the psychology of the 9/11 terrorists is not a psychology of anger, or hatred, or vengeance. The terrorists are not righting human wrongs but acting with God and for God against evil. In most general terms, it is a psychology of attachment to the good rather than a psychology of hatred for evil. Research with U.S. soldiers in WWII found something similar; hatred of the enemy was a minor motive in combat performance, whereas attachment to buddies and not wanting to let them down was a major motive (Stouffer et al, 1949). This resonance with the psychology of combat—a psychology usually treated as normal psychology—again suggests the possibility that terrorism and terrorists may be more normal than usually recognized.

Terrorism as normal psychology

The trajectory by which normal people become capable of doing terrible things is usually gradual, perhaps imperceptible to the individual. This is among other things a moral trajectory,

such as Sprinzak (1991) and Horowitz (2001) have described. In too-simple terms, terrorists kill for the same reasons that groups have killed other groups for centuries. They kill for cause and comrades, that is, with a combination of ideology and intense small-group dynamics. The cause that is worth killing for and dying for is not abstract but personal--a view of the world that makes sense of life and death and links the individual to some form of immortality.

The psychology of cause. Every normal person believes in something more important than life. We have to, because, unlike other animals, we know that we are going to die. We need something that makes sense of our life and our death, something that makes our death different from the death of a squirrel lying by the side of the road that we drive to work. The closer and more immediate death is, the more we need the group values that give meaning to life and death. These include the values of family, religion, ethnicity, and nationality--the values of our culture. Dozens of experiments have shown that thinking about death, their own death, leads people to embrace more strongly the values of their culture (Pyszcznski, Greenberg & Solomon, 1997)

These values do not have to be explicitly religious. Many of the terrorist groups since WWII have been radical-socialist groups with purely secular roots: the Red Brigade in Italy, the Baader-Meinhof Gang in Germany, the Shining Path in Peru. Animal rights and saving the environment can be causes that justify terrorism. For much of the twentieth century, atheistic communism was such a cause. Thus there is no special relation between religion and violence; religion is only one kind of cause in which individuals can find an answer to mortality.

What is essential is that the cause should have the promise of a long and glorious future. History is important in supporting this promise. A cause invented yesterday cannot easily be seen to have a glorious and indefinite future. The history must be a group history. No one ever seems to have had the idea that she or he alone will achieve some kind of immortality. Immortality comes as part of a group: family group, cultural group, religious group, or ideological group. A good participant in the group, one who lives up to the norms of the group and

contributes to the group, will to that extent live on after death as part of the group. The meaning of the individual's life is the future of the cause, embodied in the group that goes on into the future after the individual is dead.

The psychology of comrades. The group's values are focused to a personal intensity in the small group of like-minded people who perpetrate terrorist violence. Most individuals belong to many groups--family, co-workers, neighborhood, religion, country--and each of these groups has some influence on individual beliefs and behavior. Different groups have different values and the competition of values reduces the power of any one group over its members. But members of an underground terrorist group have put this group first in their lives, dropping or reducing every other connection. The power of this one group is now enormous, and extends to every kind of personal and moral judgment. This is the power that can make violence against the enemy not just acceptable but necessary.

Every army aims to do what the terrorist group does: to link a larger group cause with the small-group dynamics that can deliver individuals to sacrifice. Every army cuts trainees off from their previous lives so that the combat unit can become their family, their fellow-soldiers become their brothers, and their fear of letting down their comrades greater than their fear of dying. The power of an isolating group over its members is not limited to justifying violence. Many non-violent groups also gain power by separating individuals from groups that might offer competing values. Groups using this tactic include religious cults, drug treatment centers, and residential schools and colleges. In brief, the psychology behind terrorist violence is normal psychology, abnormal only in the intensity of the group dynamics that link cause with comrades.

Some commentators have noted that the 9/11 terrorists, at least the pilot-leaders, spent long periods of time dispersed in the U.S. How could the intense group dynamics that is typical of underground groups be maintained in dispersal? There are two possible answers. The first is that physical dispersal is not the same as developing new group connections. It seems that the dispersed terrorists lived without close connections to others outside the terrorist group. They

did not take interesting jobs, become close to co-workers, or develop romantic relationships. Although living apart, they remained connected to and anchored in only one group, their terrorist group.

The second possibility is that group dynamics can be less important to the extent that the cause—the ideology of the cause—is more important. As noted earlier, the pilot-leaders of the 9/11 terrorists were not poor or untalented; they were men with middle-class background and education. For educated men, the power of ideas may substitute to some degree for the everyday reinforcement of a like-minded group. Indeed the terrorist document referred to above is a kind of manual for using control of attention to control behavior, and this kind of manual should work better for individuals familiar with the attractions of ideas. Probably both possibilities—a social world reduced to one group despite physical dispersal, and a group of individuals for whom the ideology of cause is unusually important and powerful—contributed to the cohesion of the 9/11 perpetrators.

The psychology of cult recruiting. Studies of recruiting for the Unification Church provide some insight into individual differences in vulnerability to the call of cause and comrades (McCauley & Segal, 1987). Galanter (1980) surveyed participants in U.C. recruiting workshops in Southern California, and found that the best predictor of who becomes a member was the answer to a question about how close the individual feels to people outside the Unification Church. Those with outside attachments were more likely to leave, whereas those without outside connections were more likely to join. This is the power of comrades. Barker (1984) surveyed participants in Unification Church recruiting workshops in London, and found that the best predictor of who becomes a member was the answer to a question about goals. Those who said “something but I don’t know what” were more likely to join. This is the power of cause, a group cause that can give meaning to an individual’s life. Terrorist groups, like cult groups, cut the individual off from other contacts and are particularly attractive to individuals without close connections and the meaning that comes with group anchoring. Only those who have

never had the experience of feeling cut off from family, friends and work will want to see this kind of vulnerability as a kind of pathology. The rest of us will feel fortunate that we did not at this point in our lives encounter someone recruiting for a cult or terrorist group.

The psychology of crisis. The psychology of cause and comrades is multiplied by a sense of crisis. Many observers have noted an apocalyptic quality in the worldview of terrorists. Terrorists see the world precariously balanced between good and evil, at a point where action can bring about the triumph of the good. The “end times” or the millenium or the triumph of the working class is near, or can be made near by right action. Action, extreme action, is required immediately, for the triumph of the good and the defeat of evil. This “ten minutes to midnight” feeling is part of what makes it possible for normal people to risk their lives in violence.

Consider the passengers of the hijacked flight that crashed in western Pennsylvania. The passengers found out from their cell phones that hijacked planes had crashed into the World Trade Center. They had every reason to believe that their plane was on its way to a similar end. Unarmed they decided to attack the hijackers, and sacrificed their lives in bringing the plane down before it could impact its intended target, which was probably the Pentagon or the White House. When it is ten minutes to midnight, there is little to lose and everything to gain.

The sense of crisis is usually associated with an overwhelming threat. In the case of the 9/11 terrorists it seems to be fear that fundamentalist Muslim culture is in danger of being overwhelmed by Western culture. The military and economic power of the West, and the relative feebleness of once-great Muslim nations in the modern era, are submerging Muslims in a tidal wave of individualism and irreligion. Note that it is attachment to a view of what Muslims should be, and fear for the future of Muslims, that are the emotional foundations of the terrorists. They do not begin from hatred of the West, but from love of their own group and culture that they see in danger of extinction from the power of the West.

Similarly the U.S., mobilized by President Bush for a war against terrorism, does not begin from hatred of Al Qaeda but from love of country. Mobilization includes a rhetoric of crisis, of impending threat from an evil enemy or, more recently, an “axis of evil.” American’s anger toward Al Qaeda, and perhaps more broadly toward Arabs and Muslims, is not an independent emotion but a product of patriotism combined with a crisis of threat.

The psychology of the slippery slope. The sense of crisis does not spring full-blown upon an individual. It is the end of a long trajectory to terrorism, a trajectory in which the individual moves slowly toward an apocalyptic view of the world and a correspondingly extreme behavioral commitment. Sprinzak (1991) has distinguished three stages in this trajectory: a *crisis of confidence* in which a group protests and demonstrates against the prevailing political system with a criticism that yet accepts the system’s values, a *conflict of legitimacy* in which the group loses confidence in reform and advances a competing ideological and cultural system while moving to angry protest and small-scale violence, and a *crisis of legitimacy* in which the group embraces terrorist violence against the government and everyone who supports the government. Whether as an individual joining an extreme group, or as a member of a group that becomes more extreme over time, the individual becomes more extreme in a series of steps so small as to be near invisible. The result is a terrorist who may look back at the transition to terrorism with no sense of having ever made an explicit choice.

Psychology offers several models of this kind of slippery slope (see McCauley & Segal, 1987 for more detail). One is Milgram’s obedience experiment, in which 60 percent of subjects are willing to deliver the maximum shock level (“450 volts XXX Danger Strong Shock”) to a supposed fellow subject in a supposed learning experiment. In one variation of the experiment, Milgram had the experimenter called away on a pretext and another supposed subject came up with the idea of raising the shock one level with each mistake from the “learner.” In this variation, 20 percent went on to deliver maximum shock. The 20 percent yielding cannot be attributed to the authority of the experimenter and is most naturally understood as the power of

self-justification acting on the small increments in shock level. Each shock delivered becomes a reason for giving the next higher shock, because the small increments in shock mean that the subject has to see something at least a little wrong with the last shock if there is something wrong with the next one. A clear choice between good and evil would be a shock generator with only two levels, 15 volts and 450 volts, but the 20 percent who go all the way never see a clear choice between good and evil.

Another model of the terrorist trajectory is more explicitly social psychological. Group extremity shift, the tendency for group opinion to become more extreme in the direction initially favored by most individuals, is currently understood in terms of two mechanisms: relevant arguments and social comparison (Brown, 1986, pp. 200-244). Relevant arguments explains the shift as a result of individuals hearing new arguments in discussion that are biased in the initially favored direction. Social comparison explains the shift as a competition for status in which no one wants to fall behind in supporting the group-favored direction. In the trajectory to terrorism, initial beliefs and commitments favor action against injustice, and group discussion and ingroup status competition move the group toward more extreme views and more extreme violence.

The slippery slope is not something that happens only in psychology experiments and foreign countries. Since 9/11, there have already been suggestions from reputable people that U.S. security forces may need to use torture to get information from suspected terrorists. This is the edge of a slope that leads down and away from the rule of law and the presumption of innocence.

Terrorism as strategy

Psychologists recognize two kinds of aggression, emotional and instrumental. Emotional aggression is associated with anger and does not calculate long-term consequences. The reward of emotional aggression is hurting someone who has hurt you. Instrumental aggression is more calculating -- the use of aggression as a means to other ends. The balance between

these two in the behavior of individual terrorists is usually not clear and might usefully be studied more explicitly in the future. The balance may be important in determining how to respond to terrorism: as argued above, emotional aggression should be less sensitive to objective rewards and punishments, instrumental aggression more sensitive.

Of course the balance may be very different in those who perpetrate the violence than in those who plan it. The planners are probably more instrumental; they are usually thinking about what they want to accomplish. They aim to inflict long-term costs on their enemy and to gain long-term advantage for themselves.

Material damage to the enemy. Terrorism inflicts immediate damage in destroying lives and property, but terrorists hope that the long-term costs will be much greater. They want to create fear and uncertainty far beyond the victims and those close to them. They want their enemy to spend time and money on security. In effect the terrorists aim to lay an enormous tax on every aspect of the enemy's society, a tax that transfers resources from productive purposes to anti-productive security measures. The costs of increased security are likely to be particularly high for a country like the U.S., where an open society is the foundation of economic success and a high-tech military.

The U.S. is already paying enormous taxes of this kind. Billions more dollars are going to the FBI, the CIA, the Pentagon, the National Security Agency, and a new bureaucracy for the Secretary of Homeland Security. Billions are going to bail out the airlines, to increase the number and quality of airport security personnel, to pay the National Guard stationed at airports. The costs to business activity are perhaps even greater. Long lines at airport security and fear of air travel cut business travel and holiday travel. Hotel bookings are down, urban restaurant business is down, all kinds of tourist businesses are down. Long lines of trucks at the Canadian and Mexican borders are slowed for more intensive searches, and the delays necessarily contribute to the cost of goods transported. The Coast Guard and the Immigration and Naturalization Service focus on terrorism and decrease attention to the drug trade. I venture to

Mobilizing the ingroup. Terrorists particularly hope to elicit a violent response that will assist them in mobilizing their own people. A terrorist group is the apex of a pyramid of supporters and sympathizers. The base of the pyramid is composed of all those who sympathize with the terrorist cause even though they may disagree with the violent means that the terrorist use. In Northern Ireland, for instance, the base of the pyramid is all who agree with "Brits Out". In the Islamic world, the base of the pyramid is all those who agree that the U.S. has been hurting and humiliating Muslims for fifty years. The pyramid is essential to the terrorists for cover and for recruits. The terrorists hope that a clumsy and over-generalized strike against

them will hit some of those in the pyramid below them. The blow will enlarge their base of sympathy, turn the sympathetic but unmobilized to action and sacrifice, and strengthen their own status as leaders at the apex of this pyramid.

Al Qaeda had reason to be hopeful that U.S. strength could help them. In 1986, for instance, the U.S. attempted to reply to Libyan-supported terrorism by bombing Libya's leader, Khaddafi. The bombs missed Khaddafi's residence but hit a nearby apartment building and killed numbers of women and children. This mistake was downplayed in the U.S. but a public relations success for anti-U.S. groups across North Africa. In 1998, the U.S. attempted to reply to Al Qaeda attacks on U.S. embassies in Africa by sending cruise missiles against terrorist camps in Afghanistan and against a supposed bomb factory in Khartoum. It appears now that the "bomb factory" was in fact producing only medical supplies.

A violent response to terrorism that is not well aimed is a success for the terrorists. The Taliban did their best to play up U.S. bombing mistakes in Afghanistan, but were largely disappointed. It appears that civilian casualties of U.S attacks in Afghanistan number somewhere between 1000 and 3700, depending on who is estimating (Bearak, 2002). Although Afghan civilian losses may thus approach the 3000 U.S. victims of 9/11, it is clear that U.S. accuracy has been outstanding by the standards of modern warfare. Al Qaeda might still hope to profit by perceptions of a crusade against Muslims if the U.S. extends the war on terrorism to Iraq, Iran, or Somalia.

U.S. reaction to 9/11: some issues of mass psychology

In this section I consider several psychological issues raised by the U.S. reaction to the terrorist attacks of 11 September. Has the U.S. been terrorized? What kinds of identity shifts may have occurred after 9/11?

Fear after 9/11

There seems little doubt that the events of 9/11, soon followed by another plane crash at Rockaway Beach, did make Americans less willing to fly. In early 2002, air travel and hotel

bookings are still significantly below levels recorded in the months before the attacks. Beyond fear of flying, there is some evidence that Americans became generally more anxious and insecure. At least some law firms specializing in preparation of wills and trusts saw a big increase in business after 9/11. Gun sales were up in some places after 9/11, suggesting a search for increased security broader than the threat of terrorism. Owning a gun may not be much help against terrorists, but, at least for some individuals, a gun can be a symbol and reassurance of control and personal safety. Pet sales were also reported up in some places after 9/11. Again, a pet is not likely to be much help against terrorists, but, at least for some individuals, a pet may be an antidote to uncertainty and fear. A pet offers both an experience of control and the reassurance of unconditional positive regard (Beck & Katcher, 1996).

It is tempting to interpret a big decrease in air travel as evidence of a big increase in fear, but it may be that even a small increase in fear can produce a large decrease in willingness to fly. When the stakes are high, a small change in risk perception can trigger a large decrease in willingness to bet. Indeed decreased willingness to fly need not imply any increase in fear. Some may have already been afraid of flying, and found 9/11 not a stimulus to increased fear but a justification for fears—or for acting on fears--that had been previously ridiculed and suppressed. Thus it may be only a minority with increased fear of flying after 9/11.

Myers (2001) offered four research generalizations about perceived risk that can help explain increased fear of flying after 9/11. We are biologically prepared to fear heights, we fear particularly what we cannot control, we fear immediate more than long-term and cumulative dangers, and we exaggerate dangers represented in vivid and memorable images. All of these influences can help explain fear of flying, but only the last can explain why fear of flying increased after 9/11. Fear of heights preceded 9/11, every passenger gives up control on entering a plane, and the immediate risk of climbing on a plane is little affected by four or five crashes in a brief period of time.

Myers notes, however, that the risks of air travel are largely concentrated in the minutes of takeoff and landing. This is a framing issue: do air travelers see their risk in terms of deaths per passenger mile—which makes air travel much safer than driving—or do they see the risk as deaths per minute of takeoff and landing? With the latter framing, air travel may be objectively more risky than driving.

Still, Myers may be correct in focusing on the importance of television images of planes slicing into the World Trade Center, but the importance of these images may have more to do with control of fear and norms about expressing fear than with the level of fear. Myers reports a Gallup poll indicating that, even before 9/11, 44 percent of those willing to fly are willing to admit they feel fearful about flying. It is possible that this fear is controlled by a cognitive appraisal that flying is safe, and the images of planes crashing interfere with this appraisal. This interpretation is similar to the ‘safety frame’ explanation of how people can enjoy the fear arousal associated with riding a roller coaster or watching a horror film (McCauley, 1998a).

If the safety frame is disturbed, the fear controls behavior and, in the case of air travel, people are less willing to fly. One implication of this interpretation is that, for at least some individuals, government warnings of additional terrorist attacks in the near future would make no difference in the level of fear experienced—vivid crash images may release the latent fear no matter what the objective likelihood of additional crashes.

Acting on the fear experienced is a separate issue. It is possible that warnings of future terrorist attacks affect the norms of acting on fear of flying, that is, the warnings reduce social pressure to carry on business as usual and reduce ridicule for those who are fearful about flying. Fear of flying is an attitude, and there is no doubt that social norms have much to do with determining when attitudes are expressed in behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Indeed the impact of government warnings and increased airport security are very much in need of investigation. President Bush was in the position of trying to tell Americans that they should resume flying, that new airport security made flying safe again, even as security

agencies issued multiple warnings of new terrorist attacks. These warnings had the peculiar quality of being completely unspecific about the nature of the threat or what to do about it. The possible downside of such warnings is suggested by research indicating that threat appeals are likely to be repressed or ignored if the appeal does not include specific and effective action to avoid the threat (Sabini, 1995, pp. 565-566). Even the additional airport security may be of dubious value. It is true that many Americans seemed reassured to see army personnel with weapons stationed in airports, although the objective security value of troops with no training in security screening is by no means obvious. But if there is any value to the framing interpretation of increased fear offered above, then adding military security at airports may actually increase fear. Vivid images of armed troops at airports may be more likely to undermine than to augment the safety frame that controls fear of flying.

Differences in security procedures from one airport to another can also contribute to increased fear. A journalist from Pittsburgh called me not long after new security procedures were introduced at U.S. airports. His paper had received a letter to the editor written by a visitor from Florida, a letter excoriating the Pittsburgh airport for inadequate security. The writer had been frightened because she was asked for identification only once on her way to boarding her return flight from Pittsburgh, whereas she had been stopped for identification five times in boarding the Florida flight to Pittsburgh.

Fear of flying is not the only fear to emerge from 9/11. Survivors of the attacks on the World Trade Center, those who fled for their lives on 9/11, may be fearful of working in a high rise building and afraid even of all the parts of lower Manhattan that were associated with commuting to and from the WTC. Many corporate employees who escaped the WTC returned to work in new office buildings in northern New Jersey. In these new settings, some may have been re-traumatized by frequent fire and evacuation drills that associated their new offices and stairwells with the uncertainties and fears of the offices and stairwells of the WTC. For these people, the horror of the WTC may have been a kind of one-trial traumatic conditioning

experiment, with follow-up training in associating their new work place with the old one. Their experience and their fears deserve research attention.

A small step in this direction was a December conference at the University of Pennsylvania's Solomon Asch Center for Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict. The conference brought together eight trauma counselors from around the U.S. who had been brought in to assist WTC corporate employees returning to work in new office spaces. A report of lessons learned from this conference is in preparation, but a few issues can already be discerned. Perhaps most important is that the counselors were selected and directed by corporate Employee Assistance Programs with more experience of physical health problems than of mental health problems. Thus the counselors were all contracted to use Critical Incident Stress Debriefing techniques with every individual and every group seen; at least officially, no room was left for a counselor to exercise independent judgment about what approach might best suit a particular situation.

Similarly, the counselors were understood as interchangeable resources, so that a counselor might be sent to one corporation on one day and a different corporation the next day, even as another counselor experienced the reverse transfer. The importance of learning a particular corporate culture and setting, the personal connection between individual counselor and the managers that control that setting, the trust developed between an individual counselor and individuals needing assistance and referral in that setting—these were given little attention in the organization of counseling assistance. It appears that the experience of counselors working with WTC survivors has not yet been integrated with the experience of those working with survivors of the Oklahoma City bombing (Pfefferbaum, Flynn, Brandt, & Lensgraf, 1999). There is a long way to go to develop anything like a consensus on 'best practice' for assisting survivors of such attacks.

In sum, fear after 9/11 includes a range of fear reactions, including fear of flying by those with no personal connection to the WTC, more general fears and anxieties associated with

death from uncontrollable and unpredictable terrorist attacks, and specific workplace fears among those who escaped the WTC attacks. These reactions offer theoretical challenges that can be of interest to those interested in understanding the relation between risk appraisal and fear (Lazarus, 1991), as well as to those interested in the commercial implications of public fears.

Cohesion after 9/11: patriotism

All over the U.S., vehicles and homes were decorated with the U.S. flag after 9/11. Walls, fences, billboards, and emails were emblazoned with “God bless America.” It is clear that the immediate response to the attacks was a sudden increase in patriotic expression. The distribution of this increase across the U.S. could be a matter of some interest. Was the new patriotism greater in NYC and declining in concentric circles of distance from NYC? Was it greater among blue-collar than white-collar families? Was it greater for some ethnic groups than for others? Was it greater in cities, possibly perceived as more threatened by future terrorist attacks, than in suburbs and small towns?

The attacks of 9/11 represent a natural experiment relevant to two prominent approaches to conceptualizing and measuring patriotism. In the first approach, Kosterman and Feshbach (1989) distinguish between patriotism and nationalism. Patriotism is love of country and generally accounted a good thing; nationalism is a feeling of national superiority that is accounted a source intergroup hostility and conflict. In the second approach, Schatz, Staub, and Lavine (1997) offer a distinction between critical and uncritical patriotism. Critical patriotism refers to love of country expressed as willingness to criticize its policies and its leaders when these go wrong; uncritical patriotism refers to love of country coupled with norms against criticism—“my country right or wrong.” Critical patriotism is here accounted the good thing and uncritical patriotism the danger.

Thus both approaches distinguish between good and bad forms of patriotism, and both offer separate measures of the good and bad forms. That is, there is a scale of patriotism and a

scale of nationalism, and a scale of critical patriotism and a scale of uncritical patriotism. In both approaches, there is some evidence that the two scales are relatively independent. Some individuals score high on patriotism, for instance, but low on nationalism. Similarly, some individuals score high on critical patriotism but also score high on uncritical patriotism (an inconsistency that seems to bother those taking the scale less than it bothers theorists).

What happened to these different aspects of patriotism among Americans after 9/11? As increased cohesion is known to increase conformity and pressure on deviates, one might expect that patriotism, uncritical patriotism and nationalism increased, whereas critical patriotism decreased. Another possibility is that scores on these measures were unchanged after 9/11, but identification with the country increased in relation to other directions of group identification. That is, Americans rating the importance of each of a number of groups—country, ethnic group, religious group, family, school—might rate country higher in relation to other groups.

It seems likely that both kinds of patriotism increased, both scores on the patriotism scales and ratings of the relative importance of country. If so, additional questions can be raised. Did nationalism and uncritical patriotism increase more or less than the ‘good’ forms of patriotism? Was the pattern of change different by geography, education, or ethnicity?

Cohesion after 9/11: relations in public

News reports immediately after 9/11 suggested a new interpersonal tone in New York City. Along with shock and fear was a new tone in public interactions of strangers, a tone of increased politeness, helpfulness and personal warmth. Several reports suggested a notable drop in crime, especially violent crime, in the days after the attacks.

It would be interesting to know if these reports can be substantiated with more objective measures of social behavior in public places (McCauley, Coleman & DeFusco, 1978). Did the pace of life in NYC slow after the attacks? That is, did people walk slower on the streets? Did eye contact between strangers increase? Did commercial transactions (e.g. with bus drivers,

postal clerks, supermarket cashiers) include more personal exchange? Did interpersonal distance in interactions of strangers decrease? This research will be hampered by the absence of relevant measures from NYC in the months before 9/11, but it may not be too late to chart a decline from levels of public sociability and politeness that may still be elevated in early 2002.

Cohesion after 9/11: minority identity shifts

A few reports have suggested that minority groups experienced major changes of group identity after 9/11. Group identity is composed of two parts: private and public identity. Private identity is how the individual thinks of him- or herself in relation to groups the individual belongs to. Public identity is how the individual thinks others perceive him.

Public identity shift for Muslims and Arabs. The attacks of 9/11 produced an immediate effect on the public identity of Arabs, Muslims, and those, like Sikhs, who can be mistaken by Americans for Arab or Muslim. Actual violence against members of these groups seems mercifully to have been rare, with 39 hate crimes reported to the New York City Police Department in the week ending September 22 but only one a week by the end of December (Fries, 2001). Much more frequent has been the experience of dirty looks, muttered suggestions to “go home”, physical distancing, and discrimination at work and school (Sengupta, 2001). Many Arab-Americans and Muslims say they have afraid to report this kind of bias.

American reactions to Muslims and Arabs after 9/11 pose a striking theoretical challenge. How is it that the actions of 19 Arab Muslims can affect American perceptions of the Arabs and Muslims that they encounter? The ease with which the 19 were generalized to an impression of millions should leave us amazed; “the law of small numbers” (Tversky & Kahneman, 1971), in which small and unrepresentative samples are accepted as representative of large populations, has not been observed in research on stereotypes. Indeed the difficulty of changing stereotypes has often been advanced as one of their principal dangers.

Of course not every American accepted the idea that all Arabs are terrorists, but even those who intellectually avoided this generalization sometimes found themselves fighting a new unease and suspicion toward people who looked Arab. Whether on the street or boarding a plane, Americans seem to have had difficulty controlling their emotional response to this newly salient category. It seems unlikely that an attack by 19 Congolese terrorists would have the same impact on perceptions of African-Americans. Why not?

One possible explanation of the speed and power of the group generalization of the 9/11 terrorists is that humans are biologically prepared to essentialize cultural differences of members of unfamiliar groups. Gil-White (2001) has suggested that there was an evolutionary advantage for individuals who recognized and generalized cultural differences so as to avoid the extra costs of interacting with those whose norms do not mesh with local norms. This perspective suggests that we may have a kind of default schema for group perception that makes it easy to essentialize the characteristics of a few individuals encountered from a new group. To essentialize means to see the unusual characteristics of the new individuals as the product of an unchangeable group nature or essence. Previous familiarity with the group, a pre-existing essence for the group, could interfere with this default, such that African terrorists would not easily lead to a generalization about African-Americans.

It would be useful to know more about the experience of Muslims and Arabs in the U.S. after 9/11, not least because those experiencing bias may become more likely to sympathize with terrorism directed against the U.S. Interviews and polls might inquire not only about the respondent's personal experience of bias, but about the respondent's perception of what most in his or her group experienced. As elaborated above, the motivation for violence may have more to do with group experience than personal problems.

Public identity shift for African-Americans. The attacks of 9/11 may also have produced an effect on the public identity of African-Americans. Their sharing in the costs and threats of terrorist attack may have strengthened their public status as Americans. Several African-

Americans have suggested that the distancing and unease they often feel from whites they interact with was markedly diminished after 9/11. The extent and distribution of this feeling of increased acceptance by white Americans could be investigated in interviews with African-Americans. Again, the distinction between personal experience and perception of group experience could be important in estimating the political impact of 9/11 on African-Americans.

Finally, there is an issue of great practical importance in understanding the public identity of Muslim African-Americans as a minority within a minority. This group is likely to have faced conflicting changes after 9/11, with increased acceptance as African-Americans opposed by decreased acceptance as Muslims. The distinctive attire of African-American Muslims, particularly the attire of women of this community, makes them readily identifiable in public settings. With the attire goes a community life style that also sets this minority apart from other African Americans. Thus public reactions to Muslim African Americans should be very salient in their experience, and this experience could be determined by researchers with entrée to their community. Again the distinction between personal experience of the respondent and perceived group experience may be important.

One way of learning about shifts in the public identities of minorities is to study changes in the mutual stereotyping of majority and minority. Stereotypes are today generally understood as perceptions of probabilistic differences between groups, differences that may include personality traits, abilities, occupations, physique, clothing, and preferences (McCauley, Jussim & Lee, 1995). Thus researchers might ask both minority and majority group members about whether and how 9/11 changed their perceptions of the differences between majority and minority.

Perhaps even more important for understanding the public identity of minorities would be research that asks about *metastereotypes*. Metastereotypes are perceptions of what 'most people' believe about group differences. Although little studied, there is some evidence that meta-stereotypes are more extreme than personal stereotypes, that is, that individuals believe

that most people see stronger ingroup-outgroup differences than they do (Rettew, Billman & Davis, 1993). The public identity of the minority might thus be measured as the average minority individual's perception of what "most people" in the majority group see as the differences between minority and majority. Related meta-stereotypes might also be of interest: the average minority individual's perception of what most minority members believe about majority-minority differences, the average majority member's perception of what most majority members believe about these differences, and the average majority member's perception of what most minority members believe about these differences.

The attacks of 9/11 and their aftermath offer a natural experiment in conflicting pressures on public identity. Research on public identities of minorities could enliven theoretical development even as the research contributes to gauging the potential for terrorist recruitment in groups—Muslim Arabs in the U.S., Muslim African-Americans--that security services are likely to see as being at risk for terrorist sympathies. In particular, public identity shifts for Muslim African-Americans will be better understood by comparison with whatever shifts may obtain for African-Americans who are not Muslim.

Private identity shifts. Private identity concerns the beliefs and feelings of the individual about a group the individual is part of. The most obvious shifts in private identity are those already discussed as shifts in patriotism. Patriotism is a particular kind of group identification, that is, identification with country or nation, and increases in patriotism are a kind of private identity shift. This obvious connection between national identification and patriotism has only recently become a focus of empirical research (Citrin, Wong & Duff, 2001; Sidanius & Petrocik, 2001).

Here I want to focus on shifts in private identities of minorities. As with public identity shifts, the three minority groups of special interest are Muslim Arabs living in the U.S., African Americans, and Muslim African-Americans. For each group, research can ask about changes since 9/11 in their feelings toward the U.S. and feelings toward their minority group. What is the

relation between changes in these two private identities? It is by no means obvious that more attachment to one identity means less attachment to others, but in terms of behavior there may be something of a conservation principle at work. Time and energy are limited, and more behavior controlled by one identity may mean less behavior controlled by others. There is much yet to be learned about the relation between more particularistic identities, including ethnic and religious identities, and overarching national identity.

Group dynamics theory and political identity

Public reaction to terrorist attacks is strikingly consistent with results found in research with small face-to-face groups. In the group dynamics literature that began with Festinger's (1950) theory of informal social influence, cohesion is attachment to the group that comes from two kinds of interdependence. The obvious kind of interdependence arises from common goals of material interest, status, and congeniality. The hidden interdependence arises from the need for certainty that can only be obtained from the consensus of others. Agreement with those around us is the only source of certainty about questions of value, including questions about good and evil, about what is worth living for, working for, and dying for.

It seems possible that identification with large and faceless groups is analogous to cohesion in small face-to-face groups (McCauley, 2001; McCauley, in press a). A scaled-up theory of cohesion leads immediately to the implication that group identification is not one thing but a number of related things. Research has shown that different sources of cohesion lead to different kinds of behavior. Cohesion based on congeniality, for instance, leads to groupthink, whereas cohesion based on group status or material interest does not lead to groupthink (McCauley, 1998b).

Similarly, different sources of ethnic identification may lead to different behaviors. Individuals who care about their ethnic group for status or material interest may be less likely to sacrifice for the group than individuals who care about their group for its social reality value—for the moral culture that makes sense of the world and the individual's place in it. Research on

the effects of 9/11 on group identities might try to link different measures of group identification with different behaviors after 9/11: giving blood or money, community volunteer work, revising a will, changing travel plans, spending more time with family. The distinctions between patriotism and nationalism, and between critical and uncritical patriotism, as cited above, are steps in this direction.

Group dynamics research has shown that shared threat is a particularly potent source of group cohesion; similarly, as discussed above, the threat represented by the 9/11 attacks seems to have raised U.S. patriotism and national identification. Research also shows that high cohesion leads to accepting group norms, respect for group leaders, and pressure on deviates (Duckitt, 1989). Similarly, U.S. response to the 9/11 attacks seems to have included new respect for group norms (less crime, more politeness), new respect for group leaders (President Bush, Mayor Giuliani), and new willingness to sanction deviates (hostility toward those who sympathize with Arabs and Muslims; Knowlton, 2002).

Conclusion

In the first part of this paper, group dynamics theory was the perspective brought to bear in understanding the power of cause and comrades in moving normal people to terrorism. In particular I suggested that the power of a group to elicit sacrifice depends upon its terror-management value, which is another way of talking about the social reality value of the group.

Group dynamics research and the psychology of cohesion also provide a useful starting point for theorizing the origins and consequences of group identification, including many aspects of public reaction to terrorism. Terrorism is a threat to all who identify with the group targeted, and at least the initial result of an attack is always increased identification--increased cohesion--in the group attacked. The non-obvious quality of this idea is conveyed by the many unsuccessful attempts to use air power to demoralize an enemy by bombing its civilian population (Pape, 1996).

In sum, I have argued that both origins and effects of terrorist acts are anchored in group dynamics. Along the way I have tried to suggest how the response to terrorism can be more dangerous than the terrorists.

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