

Investigating Factors that Alter Public Support for Countering Violent Extremism

Intervention Programs for At-Risk Youth

Katherine Lacasse

Rhode Island College

Maggie Campbell-Obaid

Framingham State University

Co-authors and affiliations: Katherine Lacasse, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Rhode Island College, klacasse@ric.edu; Maggie Campbell-Obaid, Ph.D., Department of Psychology and Philosophy, Framingham State University, mobaid@framingham.edu.

Funding Details: This research was partially supported by a grant from Rhode Island College, Rhode Island College Foundation, and Rhode Island College Alumni Affairs Office.

Note: This is the preprint version. The final published version of the article can be found here: Lacasse, K. & Campbell-Obaid, M. (2022). Investigating factors that alter public support for countering violent extremism intervention programs for at-risk youth. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2022.2127834>

Abstract

Countering violent extremism (CVE) intervention programs are often designed as non-punitive approaches to reduce the likelihood of youth joining terrorist groups through offering social, family, mental health, and/or practical supports. Since public support is crucial for determining whether a CVE intervention program is implemented or successful, we conducted two online vignette-based experiments to examine how factors such as political orientation, the youth's ethnicity, and the public's perspective-taking with at-risk youth can alter their support. Across both studies (U.S. online sample $N = 153$, U.K. online sample $N = 760$), participants generally reported less support for a CVE intervention program aimed at at-risk youth than a similar gang intervention program, although in the U.K., conservatives supported both programs the same relatively lower amount (compared to liberals). This effect was partially explained by participants reporting less perspective-taking with an at-risk youth considering joining a terrorist group than considering joining a gang, which in turn led to lower public support of the program. This suggests that CVE intervention programs face barriers, even among the more liberal-leaning members of the public, and that helping people to take the perspective of at-risk youth may be one pathway for increasing public support.

Keywords: countering violent extremism, terrorism intervention, public support, political orientation, perspective-taking

Investigating Factors that Alter Public Support for Countering Violent Extremism Intervention Programs for At-Risk Youth

Designing effective strategies to address terrorism has been a major area of concern for both policymakers and academics in recent decades. One specific aspect of this problem is how to prevent or intervene in young people becoming radicalized into terrorist groups, particularly among populations most at-risk. While many programs come from a criminal justice framework, focused on surveillance, prosecution, and criminal punishment (Bhui et al. 2012; Weine et al., 2017), these are likely insufficient and can be counterproductive as they can make those most at risk of radicalization feel more isolated and disconnected from their surrounding community (Allen et al., 2019; Bhui et al., 2012). This is particularly problematic since feelings of alienation and perceived discrimination have been identified as risk factors for susceptibility to radicalization (Harpviken, 2019). These issues have led to calls for a non-punitive, more public health oriented approach to addressing terrorism prevention and interventions (Bhui et al., 2012; Dandurand, 2014; Weine et al., 2017).

In general, policies and programs that seek to address the process of terrorism radicalization and recruitment can be viewed as an element of countering violent extremism (CVE), a term that refers to a range of non-punitive programs aimed at the underlying causes of terrorism and/or violent extremism (Ambrozik, 2017). CVE approaches focus on trying to understand and address both the risk factors and protective factors not only at the individual level, but also at the levels of society, culture, and intergroup relations. CVE programs can differ in many ways, including who sponsors the program, what is included (e.g., education, psychological support, job training, community engagement, creating counternarratives), and what the goals are (Koehler, 2017; Gielen, 2017). However, CVE programs are generally

understood to include efforts at one of the following levels: prevention (or primary prevention), intervention (or secondary prevention), or deradicalization and disengagement (both of which may be considered tertiary prevention; Ambrozik, 2017; Gielen, 2017; Weine et al., 2017). Prevention strategies often target groups and aim to address the root causes of terrorism by strengthening protective factors such as access to resources, inclusion, and community well-being (Ambrozik, 2017; Gielen, 2017; Weine et al., 2017). Interventions instead tend to offer a more individualized approach to those who show interest or are in the early stages of radicalization but have not committed violence, offering tailored mental health or social services, family support, or alternative social networks (Ambrozik, 2017; Gielen, 2017; Weine et al., 2017). Deradicalization (ideological change) and disengagement (behavior change) strategies are often aimed at those who are leaving terrorist groups and may include rehabilitation or reintegration services so they can leave violence behind and start a new life (Ambrozik, 2017; Gielen, 2017).

While many questions about the effectiveness of these efforts at mitigating terrorism remain (Allen et al., 2019; Stewart, 2017; U.S. GOA, 2017), it is also important to understand public support for CVE programs, as support (or lack thereof) can impact both whether a program is implemented and whether or not it is successful (Altier, 2021; Clubb et al. 2019). In this research, we will examine public support for youth-aimed CVE intervention programs in the U.S. and U.K., two countries with unique histories of these programs. We will specifically examine how factors such as political orientation, the youth's ethnicity, and the public's perspective-taking with at-risk youth can alter their support.

A Brief Review of U.K. and U.S. CVE Programs

The U.K. has a formalized and centralized strategy for CVE with their Prevent program (shorthand for Preventing Violent Extremism) that aims “to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism” (HM Government, 2018, pg. 8). It utilizes a “hearts and minds” approach including community engagement to increase resilience, address complaints, and identify those susceptible to radicalization (Thomas, 2010). It initially focused only on Muslim communities, although more recently has expanded to include right-wing terrorist threats (Allen et al., 2019). Among other measures, Prevent includes early intervention aimed at individuals at risk of involvement in terrorism, as well as efforts to rehabilitate those who have already participated in terrorist organizations and committed violence. For example, Channel is a voluntary “early intervention” aspect of Prevent that seeks to identify people at-risk for radicalization or in the early stages of radicalization and offers them various forms of support related to skills, education, employment, health, and “ideological mentoring” (HM Government, 2018, pgs. 38-39). Also part of Prevent, the Desistance and Disengagement Programme (DDP) is aimed at those convicted of terrorism-related offenses and those at-risk of involvement in terrorism, which offers psychological support, theological support, deradicalization, mentoring, job training, and social support, among other things (Cherney et al., 2021, U.K. Government Home Office, 2019). While generally utilizing the CVE non-punitive approach, these programs are also controversial for many reasons, including lack of transparency, inclusion of law enforcement, and perceptions of the program as stigmatizing, particularly for Muslim youth, which may further sow distrust with these communities (Thomas, 2010; Thomas, 2017; Thornton & Bouhana 2019). Prevent is also critiqued for its evaluation attempts, which include inconsistent assessments, unclear measurement of outcomes, and lack of definitive evidence that the program truly reduces the risk of violence (Allen et al., 2019; Gielen, 2017; Stewart, 2017).

In the U.S., CVE programs are newer and relatively less common in comparison to the U.K. The federal government has encouraged the development of local community-driven CVE programming since 2011 with the initial Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Extremism in the U.S. strategy (Ambrozik, 2017, Barbari, 2018, White House, 2011). In 2014, a three-city pilot program was rolled out in Los Angeles, Boston, and Minneapolis. While a similar “hearts and minds” approach is often taken, the decentralized nature leads each program to design its own unique framework for achieving its goals in collaboration with local social service providers, nonprofit and for-profit organizations, local officials, and law enforcement (Ambrozik, 2017; Barbari, 2018; Stewart, 2017). A federal CVE Grant Program was created in 2016 (now titled the Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention program) to fund additional local initiatives, which have frequently taken the form of law enforcement-community partnerships (Stewart, 2017). Similar to the U.K., concerns have been raised that the programs (1) are too narrowly focused on Islamic terrorism rather than other terrorist threats and are discriminatory towards Muslims, (2) are too heavily led by law enforcement rather than other organizations and may be utilized for intelligence gathering, and (3) often fail to incorporate lessons learned from social sciences or CVE efforts in other countries (Ambrozik, 2017; Barbari, 2018; Stewart, 2017; Weine et al., 2017). Another main problem is that the effectiveness of much of this programming has not been evaluated in part due to a lack of a specific set of metrics or measurable outcomes to assess these efforts (Stewart, 2017; U.S. GOA, 2017).

It is worth explicitly noting that, as mentioned in some of the critiques above, much of these discussions and related work on this topic has focused on radical Islamic terrorism in Western countries, which reflects the general preoccupation with this form of terrorism and less focus on other forms of terrorism, such as those rooted in white supremacy. Many studies have

found that both people and media outlets more readily label violence committed by Arab and/or Muslim perpetrators as terrorism than when the violence is committed by White, non-Muslim perpetrators (e.g., D’Orazio & Salehyan, 2018; Elmasry & el-Nawawy, 2020; West & Lloyd, 2018). However, terrorism is a problem that spans ethnicities, religions, and ideologies (Chermak & Gruenewald, 2015; Horgan, 2017).

Public Support for CVE Programs

It is crucial to understand public support for CVE programs, since this support can impact whether programs receive political backing, support from elites, and funding needed to implement the programs (Altier, 2021; Clubb et al., 2019). It can also impact the program’s success since community acceptance is often a key part of integration efforts (Altier, 2021; Clubb et al., 2019). This is especially true in countries like the U.S. where such programs are the responsibility of local community leaders and organizations who must buy-in to the projects rather than programs centralized in the federal government such as in the U.K. (Ambrozik, 2017).

While work in this area is limited, it has been an increasing focus in recent years, largely using experimental designs to examine how the public might support different proposed CVE programs. The majority of people (63-67%) in a U.S. nationally representative sample were in favor of local prevention initiatives aimed at addressing the underlying conditions that lead to terrorism, regardless of whether these efforts were referred to as “countering violent extremism initiatives” or “community resilience initiatives” (Ambrozik, 2017). When examining support for a terrorist foreign fighters reintegration program in the U.K., the proposed program received somewhat more support when ideological deradicalization was included as an element, although people also perceived the program to be less effective with this inclusion (Clubb et al., 2019). In

Kenya, interviews with community members revealed that the process of reintegrating returning terrorist foreign fighters was complex, with most people supporting reintegration in general, but that lack of trust in government programs and negative stigma attached to the returnees reduced the effectiveness of reintegration efforts (Juma & Githigaro, 2021). Interestingly, when examining support for a prisoner rehabilitation program among U.S. adults, people showed less support if the program was aimed at terrorist offenders rather than other criminal offenders, although this effect was somewhat reduced if the terrorist offender was a youth (Altier, 2021).

Similar programs are used to prevent gang involvement among at-risk youth (Dandurand, 2014; Howell, 2010). In the U.S., the Comprehensive Gang Model strategies presented by the U.S. federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has many similarities to the Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Extremism strategies (OJJDP, 2014). Gang programs are similarly aimed at different levels: primary preventions aimed at offering support or services to entire communities, but also more individualized secondary interventions aimed at high-risk or gang-involved youth including things such as therapy or mentoring to create support systems and guide them towards health and accessible social alternatives (Howell, 2010). In fact, CVE prevention efforts aimed at community outreach and engagement activities are likely to do more than just prevent terrorism, but may also reduce gang membership and other crime (Ambrozik, 2017). We believe gangs serve as a good comparison group not only because the intervention programs can be similar in nature, but also because there is a fair amount of overlap between those who become members, their motivations to join, the group processes that explain acculturation into the group, and the violence the group members may commit (Dandurand, 2014; Decker & Pyrooz, 2015). There are also important differences between these groups (e.g., terrorist groups tend to be more ideologically or politically driven, members are more willing to

sacrifice, actions are often less local in scope, Decker & Pyrooz, 2015; Gómez et al., 2022) and there are also likely different public perceptions of the labels of “gang” vs. “terrorist group” that can be inferred through research, which we review more below.

There is often widespread support for gang or crime prevention, intervention, or rehabilitation programs aimed at young people, even if the youth have engaged in criminal activity (Cullen et al., 2000; Nagin et al., 2006; Piquero et al., 2010). There is reason to believe that this optimism and support would not extend to programs focused on youth at-risk for being radicalized into terrorist organizations, due to public perceptions of terrorists. Indeed, Altier (2021) found less public support for rehabilitative programming for a youth terrorist offender convicted of providing material support to a terrorist group than for an adult criminal offender convicted of murder. Although terrorists can be viewed as criminals, they are often also conceptualized as having unique personality traits or mental health disorders, being dangerously and fanatically ideological, or as evil psychopaths, evoking high degrees of fear and hatred (Hussain, 2018; Kossowska et al., 2010; McCauley, 2007; Pronin et al., 2006). In general, when people are demonized in this way, they tend to be viewed as evil or beyond redemption (Altier, 2021; Burris & Rempel, 2011; Campbell & Vollhardt, 2014) and others extoll greater punitive punishments against them (Burris & Rempel, 2011; Webster & Saucier, 2015). Research examining terrorists themselves often finds that these perceptions are inaccurate. Terrorists are a diverse group without clear psychological, trait, or mental health differences that identify them (Horgan, 2017; Monahan, 2012; Silke, 2008) and many are likely to change and disengage due to factors such as disillusionment with the group’s actions or strategies, disagreements with leadership, or burnout (Altier et al., 2017). However, these public perceptions of terrorists are likely still a driving factor in understanding public support for CVE programs.

Research on perceptions of gangs indicates that gang members are not similarly perceived as innately evil or unredeemable. Young people perceive that others join gangs due to wanting to obtain protection, acceptance, respect, and access to material goods (Kelly et al., 2011; Swetnam & Pope, 2001; Ward & Bakhuis, 2010), and prosecutors similarly described youth as joining gangs for social or financial support (Fox & Lane, 2010). Students, teachers, and police officers were all unlikely to choose being a “bad child” as a reason for gang involvement (Swetnam & Pope, 2001). People are also generally more likely to indicate that the best way to curb gangs and their associated violence is through community structural changes and resource-oriented prevention or intervention efforts, rather than through the criminal justice system or committing violence against the gang members (Fox & Lane, 2010; Ward & Bakhuis, 2010). For these reasons, we predicted:

Hypothesis 1: There will generally be lower support for a CVE intervention program aimed at curbing youth membership in terrorist groups than a similar intervention programs aimed at curbing youth membership in gangs.

Factors Altering Public Support for CVE Programs

Additional factors likely impact how much public support CVE intervention programs receive. Political orientation may play a key role in explaining support or opposition to such programs. Indeed, one study of U.S. adults found liberals are more supportive of terrorist rehabilitation programming than are conservatives (Altier, 2021). This may be partially explained by conservatives tending to report higher subjective perceptions of threat in the world around them than liberals (for a review, see Jost et al., 2017), including greater fear of terrorism (Haner et al. 2019; Onat et al., 2021; Williamson et al., 2019) and of other violent crimes including gang violence (Onat et al., 2021). Additionally, conservatives tend to show less

support for spending on social programs (Rudolph & Evans, 2005), and specifically are less willing to pay for offender rehabilitation programs than liberals (Nagin et al., 2006). Since terrorists evoke high degrees of fear and hatred as explained above, we predicted:

Hypothesis 2: Liberals will show lower support for a CVE intervention program than a gang intervention program, but conservatives will indicate low support for both programs.

The ethnic background of the youth at-risk for joining such groups may also affect how they are perceived and the subsequent support for intervention programs. Islamic terrorism has been viewed as the prototype of terrorism in several Western nations over the past decades (see a discussion in Guterman, 2013), and has received outsized media attention compared to other forms of terrorism (Kearns et al., 2019). Given this, it is perhaps unsurprising that general terrorism anxiety has been linked to greater prejudice and lower feelings of warmth towards Muslims (Andersen & Mayerl, 2018; Hawi et al., 2019). Additionally, U.K. news readers were more likely to agree that an act of violence was terrorism when it was said to be committed by a Muslim with an Arab name than when it was said to be committed by a Christian with an Anglican name (West & Lloyd, 2017). However, terrorist groups include members of all ethnic backgrounds, and Western countries have a long history of white supremacist groups committing violent acts for the purpose of creating terror (Blee, 2005; Simi, 2010). The more recent rise of far-right white nationalist groups in the U.S. and Europe has also been documented, including a rise in violence against immigrants, Muslims, Jews, and other ethnic minorities (Jones, 2018; Koehler, 2016). Research suggests that people are more supportive of extraordinary detention measures (such as not allowing the suspect to meet with a lawyer and detaining them indefinitely without a charge) and less supportive of rehabilitation programs for individuals with Arabic

names affiliated with an Islamic terrorist group rather than white individuals affiliated with white nationalist terrorist groups (Altier, 2021; Piazza 2015). Both of these studies suggest more leniency for suspected terrorists who are associated with white nationalist terrorist groups rather than Islamic terrorist groups. Therefore, we predicted that:

Hypothesis 3: There will be lower support for a CVE intervention program when the at-risk youth considering joining a terrorist group is Arab rather than white.

One psychological mechanism that may drive differences in program support is that the public may be less willing and able to perspective take with a youth considering joining a terrorist group rather than a gang. Perspective-taking is an important factor in predicting helping behavior towards outgroup members (Faulkner, 2018; Shih et al., 2009), and in predicting support for programs to address inequalities (Todd et al., 2012) or for social policies to help a particular group different from one's own (Bruneau et al., 2017). We believe that since terrorists are commonly perceived as more innately evil or irredeemable than gang members, they may be more difficult for the public to perspective take with, thereby reducing their support of CVE interventions. We specifically predict:

Hypothesis 4: Participants will be less able to perspective take with a youth considering joining a terrorist group than considering joining a gang, and that this will drive the lower support for a CVE intervention program.

Overview of Current Studies

In this manuscript, two between-subjects survey experiments are reported that examined factors influencing public support for CVE intervention programs. The studies are designed similar to past public support of CVE research, using vignettes including short descriptions of the program and the individuals it would benefit to examine how different factors alter public

support (Altier, 2021; Ambrozik, 2017; Clubb et al., 2019). However, the focus on individualized intervention programs is unique, as the past studies examined prevention, disengagement, or rehabilitation programs. This study also specifically examines programs aimed at at-risk youth, since many programs are focused on this specific demographic (Thomas, 2017). We chose to conduct the research in the U.S. and the U.K., since this would allow us to examine if support for the CVE intervention programs differ when comparing a country with a shorter, less centralized history of these programs (U.S.) to a country that has a longer history of utilizing national-level CVE programs (U.K.).

Study 1 (conducted with a U.S. online sample) and Study 2 (conducted with a U.K. online sample) both manipulated group type (gang vs. terrorist) to see if CVE intervention programs garnered less support than similar gang intervention programs. Both studies measured participants' political orientation, to examine how that may be related to participants' support for the programs. Study 2 extended beyond Study 1 by also manipulating the ethnicity of the at-risk youth (Arab vs. white) and assessed how much the participants were able to perspective take with the at-risk youth, to examine if lack of perspective-taking serves as a mechanism to explain differences in public support. Both studies received approval from the IRB research ethics committee at Rhode Island College, Protocol # 1617-1359.

Study 1

One hundred fifty-five U.S. adults were recruited through Prolific Academic in 2016. Two failed a reading check leaving $N = 153$ for analysis (see Table 1 for demographic information). Sensitivity analyses indicated that with 80% power, a regression with three predictors (two main effects and one interaction) and a sample size of $N = 153$ would pick up an effect size $f^2 = .07$, a relatively small-to-medium sized effect (Faul et al., 2009). Participants were

randomly assigned to one of two conditions based upon the group they read about: gang condition vs. terrorist condition. Random assignment was successful in that the distribution of participants' gender (women vs. men, $\chi^2 = .002, p = .97$), race/ethnicity (white vs. person of color, $\chi^2 = .002, p = .97$), and age ($t = -.78, p = .44$) did not significantly differ across the two experimental conditions.

Participants first read a vignette about an 18-year-old high school senior born and raised in New York City named Ahmed (see Appendix A for the vignettes). The first paragraph indicated that Ahmed was considering joining either (1) a gang that “sells illegal drugs in the community” or (2) an extremist political group that was declared a terrorist organization by the FBI, whose “aims are to call attention to perceived injustices against their group and to bring their values and priorities into the mainstream.” Each group was described as having recently escalated aggressive threats and had damaged property, but no descriptions of the groups committing physical violence against people are included¹. The second paragraph briefly described the intervention program. It stated that Ahmed was contacted by crime prevention officers who recently started a program aimed at steering youth away from such groups. “Rather than taking a tough and punitive approach, the program focuses on supporting youth in school, job training, mental health counseling, and integration into the broader community.”

After reading the vignette, participants answered an open-ended question asking them to “explain in a few words what type of group is described in the story.” This was used as a reading check to ensure participants read the story and to remove participants who did not correctly describe the gang or terrorist group from the story. Participants then completed a questionnaire to

¹ When testing different versions of the vignettes, no differences in public support was observed depending upon if the groups were described as having already committed violent acts or were only escalating aggressive threats. Therefore, we utilized the escalating threats versions of the vignettes in both Study 1 and 2 to reduce the likelihood of triggering psychological distress among research participants.

assess public support for such an intervention program (see Appendix B for full questionnaire). They responded to ten statements, which were intentionally designed to represent a range of public sentiments including their support for such a program (e.g., “I would support such a program in my local community”), and their sense of the effectiveness of such a program (e.g., “The services offered in the program will help prevent youth from joining [gangs/terrorist groups]” or “This program sounds like a waste of resources” - reverse scored). They responded to all statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Items were averaged to obtain a total score, with $\alpha = .82$.

Political orientation was measured using two items averaged to obtain a total score: “How would you describe your political orientation in terms of [economic/social] issues?” measured on a scale from 1 (extremely liberal) to 7 (extremely conservative) (adapted from Carney et al., 2008).

Results

A multiple linear regression examined the effects of group type, political orientation, and their interaction on program support (see Table 2). Overall, participants indicated some support for a CVE terrorist intervention program ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 0.40$ on a 7-point scale) and even greater support for a gang intervention program ($M = 5.61$, $SD = 0.84$ on a 7-point scale). This demonstrates that as hypothesized, there was less support for a CVE intervention program than a similar gang intervention program. Additionally, conservative-leaning participants displayed significantly less support for both types of programs than liberal-leaning participants. However, there was no significant interaction, indicating that contrary to the hypotheses, conservatives did not differentiate less than liberals between the two types of intervention programs (see Figure 1 for interaction graph).

Study 2

Study 1 confirmed that participants are generally less supportive of an intervention program aimed at terrorism rather than gang membership, and that conservative-leaning participants tend to be less supportive of both types of interventions than liberal-leaning participants. However, the youth was Arab-American in both conditions of this study. To expand upon the findings from Study 1, Study 2 aimed to examine how the ethnicity of the youth may alter these outcomes. Study 2 also assessed how ability to perspective take with the youth might help explain differences in support for the two programs. We also conducted Study 2 in a new national context, the U.K.

Methods

Prolific Academic was again used to recruit 792 U.K. adults in 2018. From this sample, 32 participants either failed the reading check or did not provide consent leaving $N = 760$ for analyses (see Table 1 for demographic information). Sensitivity analyses indicated that with 80% power, a regression with seven predictors (three main effects and four interactions) and a sample size of $N = 760$ would pick up on a small effect size $f^2 = .02$ (Faul et al., 2009). Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: gang & white youth, gang & Arab youth, terrorist & white youth, or terrorist & Arab youth. Random assignment was successful in that the distribution of participants' gender (women vs. men, $\chi^2 = 2.02, p = .57$), race/ethnicity (white vs. person of color, $\chi^2 = 1.10, p = .78$), and age ($F = -2.18, p = .09$) did not significantly differ across the four experimental conditions.

Vignettes were updated to use British spellings and terminology (see Appendix C for the vignettes). Group type was manipulated as in Study 1, and the youth's ethnic background was

now manipulated. The vignette now described the at-risk youth as an 18-year-old born and raised in London, and either described him as white and named Brendan or as Arab and named Ahmed.

Participants then completed the same program support questionnaire ($\alpha = .86$). They also completed a single-item perspective-taking measure. They were asked to “Please indicate how much you feel you can take [Ahmed’s/Brendan’s] perspective. By that I mean your ability to try and understand where [Ahmed/Brendan] is coming from and see things from his point-of-view.” They responded to this along a continuum from 1 (Not at all) to 100 (Very much).

Results

A multiple linear regression similar to Study 1 was conducted examining the effects of group type, youth ethnicity, political orientation, and their interactions on program support (see Table 2). Again, as hypothesized program support was lower when the youth was considering joining a terrorist group ($M = 5.04$, $SD = 0.98$) rather than a gang ($M = 5.39$, $SD = 0.86$) although support was higher for the CVE terrorist intervention program in this sample than in Study 1. Again, more conservative-leaning participants displayed less support overall for the two programs.

There was also a significant 2-way (group x political orientation) interaction (see Figure 1). As in Study 1, liberal-leaning participants were more supportive of both types of programs overall, and as hypothesized, they reported less support for a CVE intervention program than for a gang intervention program (*slope gradient* = $-.25$, $p < .001$). In this sample, as hypothesized, conservative-leaning participants did not differentiate their support by group (*slope gradient* = $-.03$, $p = .79$), and instead showed relatively similar levels of lower support for both programs. However, youth ethnicity did not lead to any significant main or interaction effects, countering the hypotheses.

To examine if perspective-taking helped explain and mediate these effects, conditional indirect effects analysis was conducted (see Table 2). As hypothesized, the indirect effect of group type on program support through perspective-taking was significant among all participants, although the indirect effect was somewhat larger for more liberal-leaning participants. This indicates that the CVE intervention program received less support at least partially due to participants indicating less ability to perspective take with a youth considering joining a terrorist group than a gang. This also indicates that the perspective-taking effect was stronger among the liberal-leaning participants but played less of a role for conservative-leaning participants.

General Discussion

Studies 1 and 2 confirmed that people are less supportive of a CVE intervention program than a similar gang intervention program. This mirrors similar research finding less public support for post-prison rehabilitation programs aimed at terrorists compared to other criminals (Altier, 2021). Study 2 also indicates that people were less able to perspective take with a youth considering joining a terrorist group rather than a gang, and this partially explains their lower support for a CVE intervention program. This reflects past research demonstrating that terrorists are often viewed as innately evil or irredeemable (Kossowska et al., 2010; McCauley, 2007; Pronin et al., 2006) more so than those joining other potentially violent groups such as gangs (Kelly et al., 2011; Swetnam & Pope, 2001; Ward & Bakhuis, 2010) and therefore may be more difficult to perspective take or empathize with. This in turn can reduce support for programs aimed at steering youth away from terrorist groups, since perspective-taking is often a key factor in predicting support for programs or policies aimed at helping a particular group different from one's own (Bruneau et al., 2017). This is a key finding, which addresses Altier's (2021) call for

more research examining why support for intervention or rehabilitation programs is lower for terrorists rather than other types of offenders.

This study also provides some description of the unique factors that lead to differential support for CVE intervention programs in comparison to similar gang intervention programs. For one, this research found that conservatives tend to be less supportive of the CVE intervention program generally, which mirrors past findings (Altier, 2021). But in the U.K., the predicted interaction effect was observed in that conservatives tended not to differentiate between terrorist and gang intervention programs as much as liberals. This may be due to conservatives tending to report higher subjective perceptions of threat from all types of violent crimes (Onat et al., 2021) or due their lower support for spending on social or offender rehabilitation programs (Nagin et al., 2006; Rudolph & Evans, 2005). Alternately, liberals are still more supportive of gang intervention programs than CVE intervention programs, indicating that they are also impacted by the negative perceptions of terrorists (Kossowska et al., 2010; McCauley, 2007; Pronin et al., 2006). This suggests that CVE programs may be even more difficult than other social programs to promote among the broader population.

Interestingly, the youth's ethnicity did not lead to any main effects or interaction effects. We expected that a bias might arise similar to past research (Altier, 2021; Piazza 2015), with participants showing less program support when presented with an Arab youth compared to a white youth. This may indicate that the ethnicity of the youth does not directly impact support for these types of CVE intervention programs. It is possible that the type of terrorist organization (Islamic terrorist vs. White nationalist terrorist) may matter more than ethnicity of the youth themselves, and this was not included in the study vignettes. Alternately, this unexpected finding may instead be due to U.K. participants (Study 2) reporting overall smaller differences in support

for the two programs than U.S. participants (Study 1). Similar effects were observed in both studies, but the effect size R^2 for Study 2 in the U.K. (8%) was much smaller than Study 1 in the U.S. (63%). U.K. participants may have more familiarity with CVE programs such as the Prevent program, and so this might explain their relatively higher support ($M = 5.04$ on 7-point scale) compared to the U.S. sample ($M = 3.93$ on 7-point scale). Since specific terrorist groups each carry unique historical and current meanings within a country, future research could examine public responses to CVE programs aimed at specific, nationally relevant terrorist groups. Additionally, it would be helpful to examine support for programs aimed at curbing violent far-right white nationalist groups among participants from different religious and ethnic groups that are frequently targeted by them.

This study has several limitations. As an initial investigation into support for CVE intervention programs, using vignettes ensured experimental control across conditions and between studies. However, future research could expand ecological validity by examining public responses to such programs when they are proposed or implemented in a community through surveys or focus groups with community members, modeled off the interview study conducted by Juma and Githigaro (2021). Additionally, our public support scale included a range of statements, some of which were more focused directly on program support and others which asked more specifically about perceived effectiveness of the program. While we did this intentionally to include a range of potential public sentiments, it is possible that perceived effectiveness and program support may not go hand-in-hand for all respondents. The Prolific online recruiting platform offers higher-quality data and a more diverse sample when compared to other online platforms, especially when compared to MTurk (Peer et al., 2017, 2021). But the samples do tend to skew more male, younger, and more educated than the general U.S. or U.K.

population, which somewhat limits the generalizability of the study findings. This data was collected between 2016-2018, and so current public support for such programs may be somewhat different due to changes in the CVE landscape since that time, such as the relatively greater focus on far-right white nationalist groups.

Since many of the participants may not have much outside information about such intervention programs, the language choices used to describe the groups and programs in our vignettes may have impacted their level of support. Describing the program as being led by “crime prevention officers” may make it sound primarily like a law enforcement led program rather than highlighting the other community actors, which is often a criticism of such CVE programs (Weine, 2017). Stating that the program supports the youth in “school, job training, mental health counseling, and integration into the broader community” may make the program seem more of an all-encompassing social support intervention rather than individualized as these programs tend to be. It is also not clear in the vignette whether the program is mandatory or not, and people may have different views of mandatory vs. voluntary programs (Cherney et al., 2021) and specifically prefer voluntary programs for youth (Altier, 2021). Finally, only the terrorist condition mentioned that the FBI or Home Secretary had declared the group a terrorist organization. The gang condition did not have these same declarations from federal officials, which may have made the terrorism condition seem more serious or frightening, and fear of violence can often lower support (Baker et al., 2015). Therefore, overall support may be higher or lower depending upon the specifics of the program design or if the groups were described somewhat differently.

Additionally, this research demonstrated that perspective-taking is one key mechanism that can help explain why CVE intervention programs garner less public support. However,

future research could examine other potential mechanisms including the public's sense of emotional empathy or dehumanization of the youth, or their attributions about why they believe youth join the groups.

Conclusion

This set of studies provides important insights into public support for CVE intervention programs that could guide policy makers in building greater public support. The current studies suggest that there are some barriers to support for such programs, as people tended to be less supportive of CVE intervention programs than similar programs aimed at curbing gang membership, even among the more liberal-leaning members of the public. One pathway for increasing program support may be helping people to take the perspective of the at-risk youth, and future research should focus on testing various mechanisms for doing so. This may involve overcoming some of the inaccurate perceptions about those who consider joining terrorist groups, sharing individual stories about young people who were at-risk but stepped away, or focusing on beliefs around the redeemability of young people. Since the threat of terrorist violence will likely remain a grave concern, building support for CVE intervention approaches comprise one promising avenue for reducing such violence.

References

- Allen, C., Isakjee, A., & Ögtem-Young, Ö. (2019). Counter-extremism, PREVENT and the extreme right wing: Lessons learned and future challenges. *University of Leicester's LIAS Working Paper Series*. <https://journals.le.ac.uk/ojs1/index.php/lias/article/view/3074/2792>
- Altier, M. B. (2021). Criminal or terrorist? Fear, bias, and public support for prisoner reentry programs. *Terrorism and Political Violence*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2020.1866556>
- Altier, M. B., Leonard Boyle, E., Shortland, N. D., & Horgan, J. G. (2017). Why they leave: An analysis of terrorist disengagement events from eighty-seven autobiographical accounts. *Security Studies*, 26(2), 305-332. <http://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2020.1769822>
- Ambrozik, C. (2017). To change or not to change? The effect of terminology on public support of countering violent extremism efforts. *Democracy & Security*, 00, 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2017.1408010>
- Andersen, H., & Mayerl, J. (2018). Attitudes towards Muslims and fear of terrorism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 41(15), 2634-2655. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1413200>
- Baker, T., Falco Metcalfe, C., Berenblum, T., Aviv, G., & Gertz, M. (2015). Examining public preferences for the allocation of resources to rehabilitative versus punitive crime policies. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 26(5), 448-462. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887403414521462>
- Barbari, N. (2018). Reconsidering CVE: The unintended consequences of countering violence extremism efforts in the America. *Homeland Security Affairs*. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2204830543/fulltextPDF/F9362CC062C47AAPQ/1?accountid=13507>

- Bhui, K. S., Hicks, M. H., Lashley, M., & Jones, E. (2012). A public health approach to understanding and preventing violent radicalization. *BioMed Central Medicine*, 10, 16. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1741-7015-10-16>
- Blee, K. M. (2005). Women and organized racial terrorism in the United States. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 28(5), 421-433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10576100500180303>
- Bruneau, E. G., Cikara, M., & Saxe, R. (2017). Parochial empathy predicts reduced altruism and the endorsement of passive harm. *Social Psychology and Personality Science*, 8(8), 934-942. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550617693064>
- Burris, C. T., & Rempel, J. K. (2011). “Just look at him”: Punitive responses cued by “evil” symbols. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 33(1), 69-80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01973533.2010.539961>
- Campbell, M., & Vollhardt, J. R. (2014). Fighting the good fight: The relationship between belief in evil and support for violent policies. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 40(1), 16-33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167213500997>
- Carney, D. R., Jost, J. T., Gosling, S. D., & Potter, J. (2008). The secret lives of liberals and conservatives: Personality profiles, interaction styles, and the things they leave behind. *Political Psychology*, 29(6), 807-840. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2008.00668.x>
- Chermak, S., & Gruenewald, J. A. (2015). Laying a foundation for the criminological examination of right-wing, left-wing, and Al Qaeda-inspired extremism in the United States. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 27(1), 133-159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2014.975646>

- Cherney, A., De Rooy, K., & Eggins, E. (2021). Mandatory participation in programs to counter violent extremism: A review of evidence for and against. *Journal for Deradicalization*, (27), 1-33. <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/457>
- Clubb, G., Barnes, E., O'Connor, R., Schewe, J., & Davis, G. A. M. (2019). Revisiting the de-radicalisation or disengagement debate: Public attitudes to the re-integration of terrorists. *Journal for Deradicalization*, (21), 84-116. <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/279/187>
- Cullen, F. T., Fisher, B. S., & Applegate, B. K. (2000). Public opinion about punishment and corrections. *Crime and Justice*, 27, 1–79. <https://doi.org/10.1086/652198>
- Dandurand, Y. (2014). Social inclusion programmes for youth and the prevention of violent extremism. In M. Lombardi, E. Ragab, & V. Chin (Eds.), *Countering radicalisation and violent extremism among youth to prevent terrorism* (pg. 23-36). Amsterdam: IOS Press.
- Decker, S. H. & Pyrooz, D. C. (2015). “I’m down for a Jihad”: How 100 years of gang research can inform the study of terrorism, radicalization, and extremism. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 9(1), 104-112. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26297330>
- D’Orazio, V. & Salehyan, I. (2018). Who is a terrorist? Ethnicity, group affiliation, and understandings of political violence. *International Interactions*, 44(6), 1017-1039. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629.2018.1500911>
- Elmasry, M. H., & el-Nawawy, M. (2020). Can a non-Muslim mass shooter be a “terrorist”? A comparative content analysis of the Las Vegas and Orlando shootings. *Journalism Practice*, 14(7), 863-879. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2019.1643766>

- Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Buchner, A., & Lang, A. G. (2009). Statistical power analyses using G* Power 3.1: Tests for correlation and regression analyses. *Behavior Research Methods*, 41(4), 1149-1160. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.41.4.1149>
- Faulkner, N. (2018). “Put yourself in their shoes”: Testing empathy's ability to motivate cosmopolitan behavior. *Political Psychology*, 39(1), 217-228. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12411>
- Fox, K. A., & Lane, J. (2010). Perceptions of gangs among prosecutors in an emerging gang city. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 38(4), 595-603. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2010.04.031>
- Gielen, A. J. (2017). Evaluating countering violent extremism. In L. Colaert's (Ed.) *'Deradicalisation': Scientific insights for policy* (pp. 101-118). Brussels: Flemish Peace Institute.
- Gómez, A., Atran, S., Chinchilla, J., Vázquez, A., Lopez-Rodríguez, L., Paredes, B., ... Davis, R. (2022). Willingness to sacrifice among convicted Islamist terrorists versus violent gang members and other criminals. *Scientific Reports*, 12(2596). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-06590-0>
- Guterman, K. (2013). The dynamics of stereotyping: Is a new image of the terrorist evolving in American popular culture? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 25(4), 640-652. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2013.814506>
- Haner, M., Sloan, M. M., Cullen, F. T., Kulig, T. C., & Lero Jonson, C. (2019). Public concern about terrorism: Fear, worry, and support for anti-Muslim policies. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023119856825>
- Harpviken, A. N. (2019). Psychological vulnerabilities and extremism among Western youth: A literature review. *Adolescent Research Review*, 5, 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40894-019-00108-y>

Hawi, D., Osborne, D., Bulbulia, J., & Sibley, C. G. (2019). Terrorism anxiety and attitudes toward Muslims. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 48(1), 84-94.

Her Majesty's Government. (2018). *CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism*.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf

Horgan, J. G. (2017). Psychology of terrorism: Introduction to the special issue. *American Psychologist*, 72(3), 199-204. <http://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000148>

Howell, J. C. (2010). Gang prevention: An overview of research and programs. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Hussain, S. (2018). Exploring people's perceptions of precursors to the development of radicalisation and extremism. *Journal for Deradicalization*, 14, 79-110.

<https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/136>

Jones, S. G. (2018, November). The rise of far-right extremism in the United States. *CSIS Briefs*. Center for Strategic and International Studies. http://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/181119_RightWingTerrorism_layout_FINAL.pdf

Jost, J. T., Stern, C., Rule, N. O., & Sterling, J. (2017). The politics of fear: Is there an ideological asymmetry in existential motivation? *Social Cognition*, 35(4), 324-353.

<https://doi.org/10.1521/soco.2017.35.4.324>

Juma, M. N., & Githigaro, J. M. (2021). Communities' perceptions of reintegration of Al-Shabaab returnees in Mombasa and Kwale Counties, Kenya. *Journal for Deradicalization*, (26), 71-109. <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/435>

Kearns, E. M., Betus, A. E., & Lemieux, A. F. (2019). Why do some terrorist attacks receive more media attention than others? *Justice Quarterly*, 985-1022.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2018.1524507>

Kelly, S., Anderson, D., Hall, L., Peden, A., & Cerel, J. (2011). Adolescent males' perceptions of gangs and gang violence. *Journal of Gang Research*, 19(1), 1-8.

Koehler, D. (2016). Right-wing extremism and terrorism in Europe. *Prism*, 6, 84-105.

Koehler, D. (2017). A typology of 'de-radicalisation' programmes. In L. Colaert's (Ed.) *'De-radicalisation': Scientific insights for policy* (pp. 63-82). Brussels: Flemish Peace Institute.

Kossowska, M., de Zavala A. G., Kubik, T. (2010). Stereotyped images of terrorists as predictors of fear of future terrorist attacks. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 2(3), 179-197. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434471003768834>

McCauley, C. (2007). Psychological issues in understanding terrorism and the response to terrorism. In B. Bongar, L. Brown, L. Beutler, J. Breckenbridge, & P. Zimbardo (Eds.), *Psychology of terrorism* (pp. 13-31). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Monahan, J. (2012). The individual risk assessment of terrorism. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 18, 167-205. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025792>

Nagin, D. S., Piquero, A. R., Scott, E. S., & Steinberg, L. (2006). Public preferences for rehabilitation versus incarceration of juvenile offenders: Evidence from a contingent valuation survey. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 5(4), 627-651.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9133.2006.00406.x>

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2014). *A law enforcement official's guide to the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model*.

<https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Content/Documents/LE-Officials-Guide-to-OJJDP-Comprehensive-Gang-Model.pdf>

Onat, I., Guler, A., Kula, S., & Bastug, M. F. (2021). Fear of terrorism and fear of violent crimes in the United States: A comparative analysis. *Crime & Delinquency* (online first).

<https://doi.org/10.1177/00111287211036130>

Peer, E., Brandimarte, L., Samat, S., & Acquisti, A. (2017). Beyond the Turk: Alternative platforms for crowdsourcing behavioral research. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 70*, 153-163. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.01.006>

Peer, E., Rothschild, D., Gordon, A., Evernden, Z., & Damer, E. (2021). Data quality of platforms and panels for online behavioral research. *Behavior Research Methods*.

<https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-021-01694-3>

Piazza, J. A. (2015). Terrorist suspect religious identity and public support for harsh interrogation and detention practices. *Political Psychology, 36*(6), 667-690.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12190>

Piquero, A. R., Cullen, F. T., Unnever, J. D., Piquero, N. L., & Gordon, J. A. (2010). Never too late. Public optimism about juvenile rehabilitation. *Punishment & Society, 12*(2), 187-207.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1462474509357379>

Pronin, E., Kennedy, K., & Butsch, S. (2006). Bombing versus negotiating: How preferences for combatting terrorism are affected by perceived terrorist rationality. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 28*(4), 385-392. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15324834basp2804_12

Rudolph, T. J., & Evans, J. (2005). Political trust, ideology, and public support for government spending. *American Journal of Political Science, 49*(3), 660-671.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2005.00148.x>

- Shih, M., Wang, E., Trahan Bucher, A., & Stotzer, R. (2009). Perspective taking: Reducing prejudice towards general outgroups and specific individuals. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 12(5), 565-577. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430209337463>
- Silke, A. (2008). Holy warriors: Exploring the psychological processes of jihadi radicalization. *European Journal of Criminology*, 5(1), 99-123. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370807084226>
- Simi, P. (2010). Why study white supremacist terror? A research note. *Deviant Behavior*, 31(3), 251-273. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639620903004572>
- Stewart, C. M. (2017). Countering violent extremism policy in the United States: Are CVE programs in America effectively mitigating the threat of homegrown violent extremism? *Homeland Security Affairs*. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2206254770?pq-origsite=gscholar&fromopenview=true>
- Swetnam, J., & Pope, J. (2001). Gangs and gang activity in a non-metropolitan community: The perceptions of students, teachers, and police officers. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 29(2), 197-207. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2001.29.2.197>
- Thomas, P. (2010). Failed and friendless: The UK's 'Preventing Violent Extremism' programme. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 12(3), 442-458. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2020.1866556>
- Thomas, P. (2017). The perception of counter-radicalisation by young people. In L. Colaert's (Ed.) *'De-radicalisation': Scientific insights for policy* (pp. 119-136). Brussels: Flemish Peace Institute.
- Thornton, A. & Bouhana, N. (2019). Preventing radicalization in the U.K.: Expanding the knowledge-base on the Channel programme. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 13(3), 331-344. <https://doi.org/10.1093/police/pax036>

- Todd, A. R., Bodenhausen, G. V., & Galinsky, A. D. (2012). Perspective taking combats the denial of intergroup discrimination. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 48*(3), 738-745. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2011.12.011>
- U.K. Government Home Office. (2019, 5 November). *Fact sheet: Desistance and Disengagement Programme*. Home Office in the Media. <https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2019/11/05/fact-sheet-desistance-and-disengagement-programme/>
- U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2017). *Countering violent extremism: Actions needed to define strategy and assess progress of federal efforts*. GAO-17-300. Washington, DC. <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-300>
- Ward, C. L., & Bakhuis, K. (2010). Intervening in children's involvement in gangs: Views of Cape Town's young people. *Children & Society, 24*(1), 50-62. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1099-0860.2009.00195.x>
- Webster, R. J., & Saucier, D. A. (2015). Demons are everywhere: The effects of belief in pure evil, demonization, and retribution on punishing criminal perpetrators. *Personality and Individual Differences, 74*, 72-77. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2014.09.041>
- Weine, S., Eisenman, D. P., Kinsler, J., Glik, D. C., & Polutnik, C. (2017). Addressing violent extremism as public health policy and practice. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression, 9*(3), 208-221. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2016.1198413>
- West, K. & Lloyd, J. (2017). The role of labeling and bias in the portrayals of acts of "terrorism": Media representations of Muslims vs. non-Muslims. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 37*(2), 211-222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2017.1345103>

The White House. (2011). *Empowering local partners to prevent violent extremism in the United States*. https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/empowering_local_partners.pdf

Williamson, H., Fay, S., & Miles-Johnson, T. (2019). Fear of terrorism: Media exposure and subjective fear of attack. *Global Crime*, 20(1), 1–25.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17440572.2019.1569519>

Table 1. Demographics, sample sizes, and descriptive statistics for Study 1 and 2.

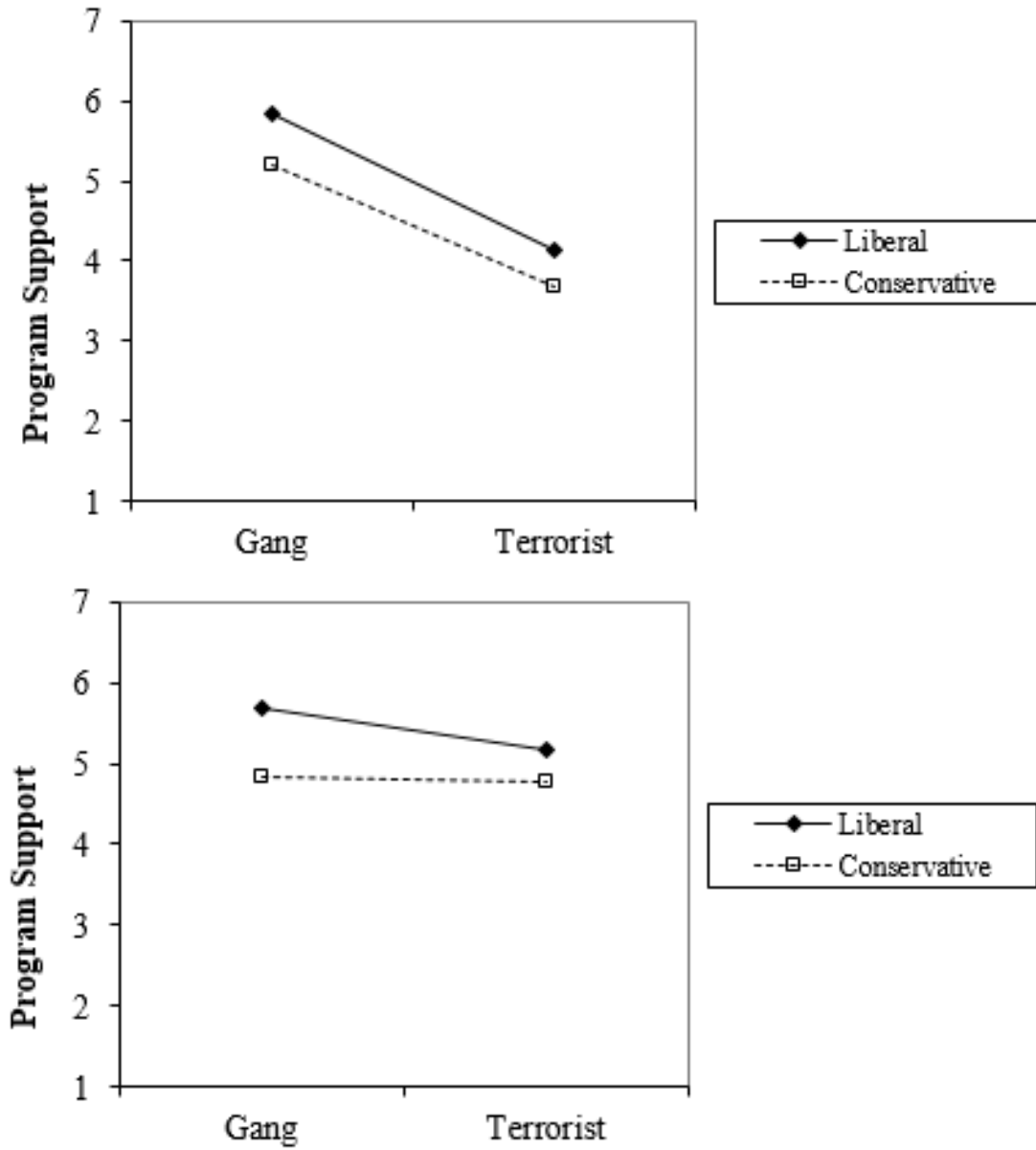
<i>Conditions</i>	Study 1		Study 2	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Gang	87	57%	---	---
Terrorist	66	43%	---	---
Gang & white youth	---	---	186	24%
Gang & Arab youth	---	---	181	24%
Terrorist & white youth	---	---	195	26%
Terrorist & Arab youth	---	---	198	26%
Total	153	100%	760	100%
<i>Demographics</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender				
Women	63	41%	476	63%
Men	88	58%	282	37%
Non-binary	2	1%	2	0.3%
Ethnicity				
White	112	73%	417	55%
Asian	18	12%	170	22%
Black	7	5%	58	8%
Hispanic	5	3%	2	0.3%
Another ethnicity	4	3%	10	1%
Two or more	6	4%	91	12%
<i>Demographics</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age	32.02	11.23	34.36	11.19
Political orientation	3.17	1.48	3.38	1.20
<i>Outcome Measures</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Program Support	4.89	1.08	5.21	0.94
Perspective-taking	---	---	45.22	28.04

Table 2. Multiple linear regressions predicting program support and conditional indirect effects of group type on program support through perspective-taking from Study 1 and Study 2

<i>Regression Predictor Variables</i>	Study 1				Study 2			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE (B)</i>	<i>B</i>	95% CI for <i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE (B)</i>	β	95% CI for <i>B</i>
Group type	-.82	.06	-.75***	-.93, -.71	-.17	.03	-.18***	-.24, -.11
Ethnicity	---	---	---	---	-.04	.03	-.04	-.11, .03
Political orientation	-.12	.04	-.16**	-.19, -.04	-.15	.03	-.20***	-.21, -.10
Group x Pol-orient	.02	.04	.03	-.05, .10	.06	.03	.07*	.002, .11
Group x Ethnicity	---	---	---	---	-.02	.03	-.02	-.08, .05
Ethnicity x Pol-orient	---	---	---	---	.008	.03	.01	-.05, .06
Group x Pol-orient x Ethnicity	---	---	---	---	-.02	.03	-.02	-.07, .04
<i>Total Model</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>R</i> ²		<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>R</i> ²	
	82.71***	3, 149	.63		8.96***	7, 748	.08	
<i>Conditional Indirect Effects</i>					<i>B</i>	<i>SE (B)</i>		95% CI for <i>B</i>
Liberal-leaning (- 1 <i>SD</i>)	---	---	---	---	---	-.04	.01	-.07, -.02*
Moderate (<i>M</i>)	---	---	---	---	---	-.03	.01	-.06, -.02*
Conservative-leaning (+ 1 <i>SD</i>)	---	---	---	---	---	-.02	.01	-.05, -.003*

Note: Political orientation was centered. Nominal variables were effect coded as follows: Group type: gang = -1, terrorist = 1; Youth ethnicity: white = -1, Arab = 1. * $p < .05$ or the 95% confidence interval does not include zero, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 1: Two-way Group x Political Orientation Interactions from Study 1: U.S. (top) and Study 2: U.K. (bottom)



Appendix A: Study 1 Vignettes

Instructions: On the next page, you will be given information about a particular young person who is having problems. You will also be given information about a program that is designed to address these problems. Please read the information carefully. Afterwards, you will be asked questions about the information you read as well as your opinions about the program.

Gang Condition

Ahmed is an 18-year-old high school senior who was born and raised in New York City. Recently he has become increasingly interested in joining a gang in his neighborhood that sells illegal drugs in the community. The gang has not been tied to any incidents of violence, but they have been escalating verbal threats of aggression against a rival gang, and recently damaged property with graffiti. Ahmed has been talking to others in his neighborhood to learn more about the gang, and talking to one of the gang leaders about joining them.

Because of his interest in joining this gang, Ahmed has gotten on the radar of some crime prevention officers who have recently started a program aimed at steering youth away from gangs. Rather than taking a tough and punitive approach, the program focuses on supporting youth in school, job training, mental health counseling, and integration into the broader community.

Terrorist Condition

Ahmed is an 18-year-old high school senior who was born and raised in New York City. Recently, he has become increasingly interested in joining an extremist political group whose aims are to call attention to perceived injustices against their group and to bring their values and priorities into the mainstream. The FBI has declared this group a terrorist organization. The group has not been tied to any incidents of violence, but they have been posting videos online with escalating verbal threats of aggression, and recently damaged property with graffiti. Ahmed has been reading about this group online, and has been talking to a local leader of the group about getting more involved.

Because of his interest in joining this group, Ahmed has gotten on the radar of some crime prevention officers who have recently started a program aimed at steering youth away from radicalization and involvement in extremist groups. Rather than taking a tough and punitive approach, the program focuses on supporting youth in school, job training, mental health counseling, and integration into the broader community.

Manipulation Check Question (open ended):

Please briefly explain in a few words what type of group is described in the story:

**Appendix B:
Program Support Questionnaire**

Instructions: The following statements concern your opinions about the crime prevention program proposed to prevent young people from getting involved in [gangs/terrorist groups]. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement about the crime prevention program.

Response options: Scale from 1(Strongly disagree) to 7(Strongly agree)

- 1) This program would not be very effective at preventing young people from joining [gangs/terrorist groups].
- 2) This program would help tackle the problem of [gangs/terrorist groups] more generally.
- 3) This program sounds like a waste of resources.
- 4) I would support such a program in my local community.
- 5) If a young person is already considering joining a [gang/terrorist group], they really cannot be helped.
- 6) Working hands-on with young people who are considering joining a [gang/terrorist group] is a good way to address the problem.
- 7) This program would only be coddling young people who consider joining a [gang/terrorist group].
- 8) The services offered in the program will help prevent young people from joining [gangs/terrorist groups].
- 9) A tougher approach should be taken with young people who consider joining [gangs/terrorist groups].
- 10) I would be upset if such a program was implemented in my local community.

Appendix C: Study 2 Vignettes

Instructions: On the next page, you will be given information about a particular young person who is having problems. You will also be given information about a programme that is designed to address these problems. Please read the information carefully. Afterwards, you will be asked questions about the information you read as well as your opinions about the programme.

Arab Youth, Gang Condition:

Ahmed is an 18-year-old British boy of Arab origin in year 13 who was born and raised in London. Recently he has become increasingly interested in joining a gang in his neighbourhood that sells illegal drugs in the community. The gang has not been tied to any incidents of violence, but they have been escalating verbal threats of aggression against a rival gang, and recently damaged property with graffiti. Ahmed has been talking to others in his neighbourhood to learn more about the gang, and talking to one of the gang leaders about joining them.

Because of his interest in joining this gang, Ahmed has come to the attention of some crime prevention officers who have recently started a programme aimed at steering young people away from gangs. Rather than taking a tough and punitive approach, the crime prevention programme focuses on supporting young people in school, job training, mental health counselling, and integration into the broader community.

White Youth, Gang Condition:

Brendan is an 18-year-old White British boy in year 13 who was born and raised in London. Recently he has become increasingly interested in joining a gang in his neighbourhood that sells illegal drugs in the community. The gang has not been tied to any incidents of violence, but they have been escalating verbal threats of aggression against a rival gang, and recently damaged property with graffiti. Brendan has been talking to others in his neighbourhood to learn more about the gang, and talking to one of the gang leaders about joining them.

Because of his interest in joining this gang, Brendan has come to the attention of some crime prevention officers who have recently started a programme aimed at steering young people away from gangs. Rather than taking a tough and punitive approach, the crime prevention programme focuses on supporting young people in school, job training, mental health counselling, and integration into the broader community.

Arab Youth, Terrorism Condition:

Ahmed is an 18-year-old British boy of Arab origin in Year 13 who was born and raised in London. Recently, he has become increasingly interested in joining an extremist political group whose aims are to call attention to perceived injustices against their group and to bring their values and priorities into the mainstream. The Home Secretary has declared this group a terrorist organisation. The group has not been tied to any incidents of violence, but they have been posting videos online with escalating verbal threats of aggression, and recently damaged property with graffiti. Ahmed has been reading about this group online, and has been talking to a local leader of the group about getting more involved.

Because of his interest in joining this group, Ahmed has come to the attention of some crime prevention officers who have recently started a programme aimed at steering young people away from radicalisation and involvement in extremist groups. Rather than taking a tough and punitive approach, the crime prevention programme focuses on supporting young people in school, job training, mental health counselling, and integration into the broader community.

White Youth, Terrorism Condition:

Brendan is an 18-year-old White British boy in Year 13 who was born and raised in London. Recently, he has become increasingly interested in joining an extremist political group whose aims are to call attention to perceived injustices against their group and to bring their values and priorities into the mainstream. The Home Secretary has declared this group a terrorist organisation. The group has not been tied to any incidents of violence, but they have been posting videos online with escalating verbal threats of aggression, and recently damaged property with graffiti. Brendan has been reading about this group online, and has been talking to a local leader of the group about getting more involved.

Because of his interest in joining this group, Brendan has come to the attention of some crime prevention officers who have recently started a programme aimed at steering young people away from radicalisation and involvement in extremist groups. Rather than taking a tough and punitive approach, the crime prevention programme focuses on supporting young people in school, job training, mental health counselling, and integration into the broader community.

Manipulation Check Question (open ended):

Please briefly explain in a few words what type of group is described in the story: