



Contribution ID: 150

Type: **Paper Abstract (Closed Panels)**

Taking Advantage of Government Repression: How Terrorist Groups Adapt Domestic Terrorism Target Selection To Recruit

Models of terrorism target selection are not well connected to strategic decision-making and behavioural motivations. This paper addresses this gap and connects terrorist groups' strategic objectives of recruitment and support building with terrorist attack decision-making. Terrorist groups make strategic short-term changes in two violent tactics –(1) attack target selection and (2) attack brutality –following government repression to attract support from aggrieved and vengeful individuals. A new model of Government-Civilians-Terrorist Group interactions is introduced that develops expectations of how terrorist groups react to government repression of civilians. Terrorist groups can appeal to civilians' desires for vengeance by strategically attacking government actors responsible for repression and increasing the brutality of these attacks. Terrorist groups can also restrict violence against civilians to keep grievances focused on government repression. Identifying these strategic adaptations in terrorist attack patterns improves two of the largest limitations in terrorism studies –understanding terrorist groups' strategic calculus and attack target selection. The proposed terrorist group strategic adaptations are assessed using Event Coincidence Analysis (ECA), a big data analytics methodology applied in brain and climate sciences, but is lacking in terrorism studies. ECA identifies causation and temporal patterns between events. In the analysis, repression is measured by government response to protest events and tested against domestic terrorist attack event data from 1990-2017. The initial results show that physical abuse of protesters and killing protesters trigger 79% and 101% increased risk of attacks against government targets, respectively. Whereas, neither triggers an increased risk of terrorism against civilian targets.

What discipline or branch of humanities or social sciences do you identify yourself with?

Political Science

If you are submitting an Open Panel proposal, have you included all four abstracts in attachment?

No, I am submitting a Closed Panel abstract

Are you a PhD student or early-career researcher?

No

Primary author: KLEIN, Graig (Leiden University)

Presenter: KLEIN, Graig (Leiden University)

Track Classification: Closed Panels: Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism