The Role of Community in Countering Radicalization to Violence: A Winnipeg Case-Study.


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**Abstract**

In 2012 the Canadian Government identified "homegrown" Sunni Islamist extremism as one of the most significant emerging threats to Canada's security. Since then, the government has been actively promoting counter-radicalization and emphasizing the need for community involvement. Scholarly research on counter-terrorism has also been advocating for partnering with communities and leveraging social forces. What accounts for the growing call for engaging the community?  This thesis explores the role of community in countering radicalization to violence. The research is based on a literature review on countering radicalization and a Winnipeg case-study conducted through interviews of stakeholders from both the Muslim community and the broader Winnipeg community. This thesis argues that community involvement is imperative for preventing radicalization to violence, as well as mitigating the numerous concomitant issues that negatively affect community fabric.

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# Contents

**Chapter 1. Community and Countering Radicalization to Violence.**

This chapter introduces the research question, states the research goal, and explains how this goal will be achieved. It also provides a conceptualization of the terms used throughout the research in order to make the study clear and coherent.

**Introduction.**

In 2012 the Government of Canada introduced its very first Counter-terrorism Strategy "Building Resilience Against Terrorism."[1] Even though Canada has seen terrorism before, with the deadliest incident in 1985 – The Air India bombings, this document identified terrorism as one of the leading threats to Canada's security. More specifically, the Strategy stated: "violent Islamist extremism is the leading threat to Canada's national security."[2] In addition, violent "homegrown" Sunni Islamist extremism - both at home and abroad - was identified as one of the three components of the terrorist threat posed to Canada (with other international terrorist groups and domestic, issue-based extremism being the other two).[3] Besides identifying the scope and nature of the terrorist threat to Canada, this document outlined a set of counter terrorism-measures, emphasizing partnership with international allies, and all levels of government and civil society as the key instrument.[4]

In 2013, 2014, and 2016 the Government of Canada published reports on the terrorist threat to Canada, which reinforced the need for comprehensive counter-terrorism measures.

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[1] Government of Canada. *Building Resilience Against Terrorism: Canada's Counter-Terrorism Strategy* (2013), accessed July 30, 2017, https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/rslnc-gnst-trrrsm/rslnc-gnst-trrrsm-eng.pdf.
[2] Ibid, 2.
[3] Ibid, 6.
[4] Ibid, 1.

"Comprehensive" refers to the development of both preventive and responsive measures, which can ensure that "individuals and communities will be able to withstand violent extremist ideologies and where a society is resilient to a terrorist attack."[5]

The 2013 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada emphasized the need for "outreach programs and engagement with community members and local organizations to raise awareness and to help identify those who may be attempting to radicalize others and promote violence."[6] The following year, the 2014 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada took an even further step and stated that "the means to help prevent violent extremism ultimately lie within communities."[7] The 2016 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada announced the inception of a new national office for community outreach to counter radicalization to violence.

The three aforementioned documents signal a clearly noticeable trend by which the Canadian Government has identified communities as key players in the struggle against countering violent extremism. Meanwhile, scholarly research on counter-terrorism has also been advocating for partnering with communities and leveraging local social forces to counter radicalization to violence. With reference to such policy, this thesis explores the contributions that communities can make in countering radicalization to violence. In order to achieve this goal, this thesis addresses the following questions: a) why do we  fail to predict radicalization to

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[5] Government of Canada, *Building Resilience Against Terrorism: Canada's Counter-Terrorism Strategy,* 11.
[6] Public Safety Canada, *2013 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada.* Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada (2013), accessed July 30, 2017, https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/trrrst-thrt-cnd/trrrst-thrt-cnd-eng.pdf.
[7] Public Safety Canada, *2014 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada,* Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, (2014), accessed July 30, 2017, https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/2014-pblc-rpr-trrrst-thrt/2014-pblc-rpr-trrrst-thrt-eng.pdf.

violence; b) why do individuals radicalize and become violent extremists; c) why can't governments alone counter radicalization to violence; d) what means and tools are most appropriate for countering radicalization to violence; e) what means and resources do communities possess and governments lack, and f) why is cooperation between governments and communities essential for countering violent extremism?

Since this study aims to develop an in-depth understanding of countering violent extremism, it implements a qualitative research design based on the literature review, as well as primary and secondary documents. Also, to give the study more credibility and bring nuance to extant findings, it draws from a local case-study. A set of semi-structured interviews was conducted in Winnipeg with Muslim community members and other stakeholders. Since 9/11 the Muslim community has been the target community of counter-terrorism strategies as well as a victim of stereotyping, racism, and Islamophobia. In addition, since homegrown Sunni Islamist Extremism has been identified as one of the main terrorist threats posed to Canada, the Muslim community presents interest for this thesis. This is not to suggest that the issue of homegrown radicalization to violence is specific to the Muslim community. In fact, radicalization to violence is not exclusive to any religion, ethnicity or minority group.

The structure of the thesis is organized into six Chapters. Chapter One introduces the research questions and conceptualizes key terms and definitions used throughout the study in order to make the research clear and coherent.

Chapter Two contextualizes the issue and provides a theoretical framework used to guide the research.

Chapter Three presents key findings from the literature review. It elaborates on what we already know about radicalization to violence, countering it and community involvement.

Chapter Four explains why and which methodology is used to conduct research, as well as identifies its strengths and limitations.

Chapter Five presents the Winnipeg Case Study. It presents the interviewees' perceptions, experiences, and suggestions regarding countering radicalization to violence. It presents findings from the interviews, which sought to obtain information on existing initiatives on countering radicalization in Winnipeg, community awareness on the issue, its involvement in countering radicalization and its cooperation with government structures. The interviews also sought to shed light on complexities of community involvement in countering radicalization to violence and areas of improvement.

The final chapter – Chapter Six– summarizes the findings by addressing questions initially posed by the thesis. It also presents conclusions and offers suggestions for further research.

**Conceptualization**

To make the study clear, it is necessary to define the following terms used throughout the thesis: radicalization, radicalization to violence, de-radicalization, disengagement, counter-radicalisation, and home-grown Islamist extremism.

There is no consensus on the term radicalization and it is a relative concept.[8] In order to conceptualize radicalization it is necessary to primarily define radicalism. Schmid profoundly elaborates on this by going back to the roots of 'radicalism'. He explains that 'radicalism' came to use as early as the 18$^{th}$ century and referred to the Enlightenment and the French and American revolutions, and later, in the 19$^{th}$, it became more widespread and was used to refer to a political agenda advocating thorough social and political reform.[9] Moreover, 'radical' referred primarily to liberal, anti-clerical, pro-democratic, progressive political positions," whereas "contemporary use – as in 'radical Islamism' – tends to point in the opposite direction embracing an anti-liberal, fundamentalist, anti-democratic and regressive agenda."[10] Thus, Schmid argues that the concept of 'radical' becomes a relative one and, as advocated by Segwick, "can be best positioned in relation to mainstream political activities, at least in the context of democratic

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[8] Dr. Alex P. Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review,* ICCT Research Paper, (The Hague: ICCT, 2013), 7, accessed July 30, 2017, https://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Schmid-Radicalisation-De-Radicalisation-Counter-Radicalisation-March-2013.pdf.
[9] Ibid, 6.
[10] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 7.

societies."[11] It is extremely important to keep in mind that "radicals are not per se violent,"[12] and radicalization does not necessarily lead to terrorism.

Radicalization has a cognitive and a behavioural dimension.[13] "Cognitive radicalization involves acquiring values, attitudes, and political beliefs that deviate sharply from those of mainstream society. Behavioral radicalization involves participation in a range of radical activities, whether legal or clandestine, which could culminate in terrorism."[14] Therefore, only behavioral radicalization could result in terrorism.

Another important part of conceptualising radicalisation requires making a clear distinction from violent extremism, which is often mistakenly used as its equivalent. Schmid concludes that radicals may be violent or not, might or might not be democrats, while extremists are never democrats. Schmid supports Jeffrey M. Bale's view that radicals have a more open mindset which, permits society to bring radical militants back into the mainstream, whilst extremists are closed-minded and are much less likely to be brought back to mainstream. When distinguishing between radicalisation and violent extremism, the emphasis is that while radicals may advocate for reformist and radical political change, it does not necessarily entail "an extremist worldview that accepts in the legitimacy of the use of violence to advance a social or political goal."[15]

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[11] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 7.

[12] Ibid, 8.

[13] Mohammed Hafez, and Creighton Mullins, "The Radicalization Puzzle: A Theoretical Synthesis of Empirical Approaches to Homegrown Extremism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 38 (2015): 961, accessed July 30, 2017, doi:10.1080/1057610X.2015.1051375.

[14] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 8.

[15] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 8

Extremism is sometimes divided into violent and non-violent. Violent extremism is synonymous to terrorism, while non-violent extremism needs further clarification. Non-violent extremism is not directly involved in terrorist action, nevertheless it supports and promotes the goals and methods of terrorists.[16]

At this point it is important to clarify what is it that we are trying to prevent/counter within the frames of this study. When radicalization does not lead to terrorism, it may not pose any significant threat. Nevertheless, when radicalization leads to extremism both violent and non-violent, it becomes a threat. To counter this threat, it is necessary to prevent one from taking on an extremist and violent path. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between simply radicalization and radicalization that leads to violence as this makes a significant difference for counter-terrorism policies. "Targeting the wrong people can breed resentment and alienation, and erode the very freedoms Western governments want to preserve."[17]

The Canadian government doesn't make this distinction clear, as it defines radicalization in the following way: "radicalization, which is the precursor to violent extremism, is a process by which individuals are introduced to an overtly ideological message and belief system that encourages movement from moderate, mainstream beliefs towards extremist views."[18] Aside from challenging the statement that radicalization is a precursor to violent extremism, there is another contested aspect in this definition – whether radicalization is actually a process.

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[16] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 10.

[17] Jamie Barlett, Jonathan Birdwell, and Michael King, 2010, *The Edge of Violence: A Radical Approach to Extremism,* (London: Demos, 2010), 7, accessed July 30, 2017, http://www2.gsu.edu/~crirxf/Edge%20of%20violence.pdf.

[18] Government of Canada, *Building Resilience Against Terrorism: Canada's Counter-Terrorism Strategy.*

Even though numerous scholars do define radicalization as a process, Hafez and Mullins state that they "do not find evidence in the vast empirical literature on radicalization to justify this orderly image of a process."[19] They reject the idea of a linear process that proceeds in stages and point towards the direction of characterizing radicalization as an evolutionary, nonlinear phenomenon that "emerges out of a convergence of several predisposing risk factors, random and decentralized network dynamics, or sociopolitical and psychological mechanisms at various levels of analysis."[20] The main point of rejecting that radicalization is a process is acknowledging that it does not happen in certain stages, rather it has many paths, where the composition of factors does not always follow in the same order.

This thesis does not agree with the definition of radicalization provided by the Government of Canada due to the aforementioned inconsistencies. Instead, it differentiates between radicalization of the mind and ideas (contradicting mainstream ideas and contravening the status quo) and radicalization to violence, which entails support or the execution of violence. Nevertheless, the Government of Canada's definition mentions an important aspect of radicalization to violence – its gradual characteristic. This aspect is especially important for counter-terrorism efforts as it provides an opportunity to identify and intercept radicalization to violence before violent action takes place.

Understanding radicalization and radicalization to violence is necessary for conceptualizing counter-radicalization, and setting it apart from de-radicalization and disengagement, which are often mistakenly confused. De-radicalization refers to change in

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[19] Hafez and Mullins, "The Radicalization Puzzle: A Theoretical Synthesis of Empirical Approaches to Homegrown Extremism," 960.
[20] Ibid.

people's attitudes and beliefs entailed in the terrorism justifying ideology.[21] It is also defined as

the practice of encouraging those with extreme and violent religious or political ideologies to

adopt more moderate views. De-radicalization is used both to refer to preventing violent action

and extremism, as well as "de-programming of those already radicalized."[22] Unfortunately, it is

unclear whether "those already radicalized" refers to those who are radicalized to violence, or

those who simply hold radical ideas without any intent for violent action. For clarity, I view

deradicalization as de-programming of those already radicalized to violence. Preventing violent

action and extremism is also in various sources referred to as counter-radicalization. Once again,

the term counter-radicalization poses the question of whether it is simply radicals that we are

countering or those specifically radicalized to violence? From the general context of literature

that uses these terms, it seems that both de-radicalization and counter-radicalization refer mainly

to terrorism, therefore the propensity of radicalization to violence. Within the context of this

thesis counter-radicalization refers unambiguously to countering radicalization to violence.

      Another important clarification to be made is the difference between de-radicalization

and disengagement. Disengagement refers specifically to withdrawal from violent action and

terrorism. "Disengagement refers to a behavioral change, such as leaving a group or changing

one's role within it. It does not necessitate a change in values or ideals, but requires relinquishing

the objective of achieving change through violence."[23] Therefore, the clear distinction between

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[21] Arie W.Kruglanski, Michele J. Gelfand, and Rohan Gunaratna, "Aspects of Deradicalization." *Institute for the Study of Assymetric Conflict,* accessed April 06, 2016, http://www.asymmetricconflict.org/articles/aspects-of-deradicalization/.
[22] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 40.
[23] Tobias Metzger, "Caught Between "Deradicalization" and "Disengagement:" Clarifying Terms in the Discourse of Terrorism." *Inquiries* 5 (2013): 2, accessed July 30, 2017, http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/785/caught-between-deradicalization-and-disengagement-clarifying-terms-in-the-discourse-of-terrorism.

de-radicalization and disengagement is that the former refers to change in ideas, ideologies, and state of mind whereas the latter refers to change in behaviour. Disengagement does not necessarily lead to de-radicalisation. In fact, "disengagement without de-radicalisation might be the rule, rather than the exception."[24]

Altogether, the line between radicalism and extremism is thin, as well as between counter-radicalization, de-radicalization and disengagement. They may sometimes overlap, especially, since it is not always clear whether an individual is just a radical or an extremist. This is important to consider, as counter-radicalization could end-up targeting not only those on the path of radicalization to violence, but also simply radicals. Consequently, more research is needed to understand where radical thinking turns into radical action. Clarifications as such will enhance the efficacy of counter-radicalization measures and avoid targeting the wrong people.

Even though radicalisation doesn't presuppose solely Islamist extremism, and various groups like white supremacists (KKK and Neo Nazis gangs), bikers (Bandidos or Hells Angels), and street gangs (Crips and the Bloods, Muslim London Patrol) are also considered radical groups, and therefore counter-radicalization programs aren't only for the 'potential Muslim terrorists' but for large groups of criminals,[25] in this research counter-radicalization mainly focuses on homegrown Islamist extremists.

The Canadian Government defines homegrown extremists as "those individuals who have become radicalized by extremist ideology and who support the use of violence against their

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[24] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 29.

[25] Jonathan Wade, "Canada Needs a Stronger Deradicalization Program." *German Institute on Radicalization and De-Radicalization Studies* (2015), accessed July 30, 2017, http://girds.org/news/canada-needs-a-stronger-deradicalization-program.

countries of residence, and sometimes birth, in order to further their goals.[26] To define Homegrown Islamist Extremists we need to further add the concept of 'Islamist' to this definition. "Islamists can be defined as those who reject the separation of religious authority from the power of the state. Islamists seek to establish some version of an Islamic political and legal structure.[27] It should be noted that this distinction encompasses both violent and nonviolent Islamists."[28] Islamist radicalization involves adopting a belief that, to recreate an Islamic state, Muslims must not only adhere to a strict Salafist or ultraconservative interpretation of Islam but also wage jihad, defined as the struggle against the enemies of Islam, including non-Muslim nations (especially the United States) and the current rulers of Muslim states who have supplanted God's authority with their own."[29] When 'Islamist' is paired with 'extremist' we end up with Islamists who either support or carry out violence to advance their goals. Thus, Homegrown Islamist Extremists are individuals who have become radicalized by extremist Islamist ideology and who either support or use violence against their countries of residence, and sometimes birth to further their goals.

Overall, radicals are not per se dangerous, whereas extremists are. Counter-radicalization programs target individuals at risk of becoming extremists and potential terrorists or terrorist supporters. De-radicalization programs mainly deal with those already radicalized to extremism and terrorism. This study focuses on the counter-radicalization practices and strategies. Also,

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[26] Government of Canada, *Building Resilience Against Terrorism: Canada's Counter-Terrorism Strategy,* 7.
[27] Angel Rabasa, Stacie L. Pettyjohn, Jeremy J. Ghez, and Christopher Boucek, *Deradicalizing Islamic Extremists,* (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 2009), 2.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.

counter-radicalization is researched within the scope of countering homegrown Islamist extremism.

**Chapter 2. Methodology.**

In this chapter, I present the methodology applied in my study. I elaborate on the research design, operationalization, limitations and strengths of the chosen methodology, and on the Winnipeg case study. I present my experience conducting the interviews and highlight key aspects of the interview process.

**Research Design.**

Since this study aims to develop an in-depth understanding of countering radicalization to violence, it employs a qualitative research design based on both primary and secondary sources. It builds on an extensive literature review of published research on radicalization (to violence), counter-radicalization, home-grown violent extremism, terrorism and counter-terrorism mainly found within sociology and psychology fields. Other secondary and primary documents, such as newspaper articles and public policy, were also consulted.

Further, the research seeks to bring nuance to existing findings by resorting to primary sources through drawing from a local case study. This study is a set of semi-structured interviews conducted with various stakeholders both within and outside the Muslim community in Winnipeg on the issue of radicalization to violence.  The 6 research subjects comprise Muslim community leaders, Muslim community members, scholars knowledgeable on the issue of radicalization and terrorism, city Councillors who come in contact with the Muslim community on a regular basis, the Winnipeg Police, newcomer support workers, and Aaron Driver's lawyer. These research subjects bring value through their unique insight on the issue of radicalization to violence, countering it and community involvement. The perspectives they have not only reflect

their personal opinions, but could also be illustrative of the various standpoints different stakeholder groups hold regarding the issue.

To answer the research question and the sub-questions that lead up to it, the thesis begins with elaborating on what we already know about radicalization to violence, countering it and community involvement through analyzing existing literature. This part addresses various aspects beginning with the difficulties of identifying radicalization to violence and ending with the problems of existing counter violent extremism (CVE) programs. Part One addresses the scope and nature of radicalization to violence in general, and sets the stage for narrowing down to a concrete scenario – the Winnipeg Case Study.

The second step, facilitated by a single case study method, permits an in-depth review of the local situation in Winnipeg. This part addresses the unique experience of Winnipeg's Muslim and broader community of dealing with radicalization to violence. Such information is obtained through 15 semi-structured interviews and complimented by primary and secondary sources, such as newspaper articles, information on organization's websites, pamphlets and booklets issued by such organizations. Interviewees were asked to reflect upon their awareness and knowledge about the issue of radicalization to violence, current situation of community involvement, community cooperation with government structures, reasons for radicalization to violence, Islamophobia, existing and possible complications when dealing with radicalization to violence, and to give advice for future initiatives and policy implications (see 2.4 The Case Study).

Grounded theory approach is implemented in the Winnipeg Case Study. It is a systematic research approach which involves the discovery of theory though data collection and analysis.[30] Its purpose, therefore, is to enable generation of theory/hypothesis from collected data, rather than to test existing theory.[31] This inductive approach permits to generate hypotheses/theories regarding community involvement in countering radicalization to violence. Therefore, this research is led and guided by the experiences of my interviewees and finding patterns in their experiences.[32]

The final part of this research draws conclusions through combining findings from the literature review in Part One and the Winnipeg case-study in Part Two. Since qualitative research is explorative, this study generates a hypothesis about the role of community in countering radicalization to violence. This part also suggests further avenues for research on the issue.

**Operationalization.**

Prior to conducting semi-structured interviews, a set of potential interviewees was determined. Potential interviewees *were* selected by using openly available information about stakeholders, such as Muslim community leaders, members and other stakeholders (Winnipeg Police, City Councillors, Aaron Driver's lawyer, etc.) and the positions and roles they hold and play in the community. The interviewee selection process attempted to diversify target interviewees by incorporating various aspects of community life. Therefore, a list of different organizations was first established, such as mosques, community centres, schools, and organizations for the elderly, etc. Since there is only a limited number of such organizations in

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[30] Hilary Engward, "Understanding Grounded Theory," *Nursing Standard*, 28(2013), 37.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.

Winnipeg, the research attempted to have at least one interviewee from each organization for the greatest possible representativeness. Recruitment scripts were sent to administrators of "Winnipeg Muslims" Facebook page and to the Manitoba Islamic Association in order to recruit Muslim community members.

After the list of potential interviewees was compiled, potential interviewees were then contacted by e-mail. In many cases snowball sampling occurred, where participants, after being interviewed, referred me to other potential participants. Snowball sampling, also known as chain referral sampling, involves primary data sources nominating other potential primary data sources to be used in the research.[33] Advantages of primary data sampling include the ability to recruit hidden populations, the possibility to collect primary data in a cost-effective manner, the ability to complete a study in a short duration of time, and little planning required to start the primary data collection process.[34] The disadvantages of snowball sampling are the following: oversampling a particular network of peers can lead to bias; respondents may be hesitant to provide names of peers and asking them to do so may raise ethical concerns; there is no guarantee about the representativeness of samples; it is not possible to determine the sampling error and make statistical inferences from the sample to the population due to the absence of random selection of samples (mainly a disadvantage for quantitative studies).[35] In my study, the main benefit of snowball sampling was the quick and easy access to interviewing community members. Community leaders and public figures were easier to reach as their contact information could be found through publicly available sources, mainly the Internet. The main disadvantage of

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[33] John Dudovskiy, "Research Methodology," accessed September 19, 2017, http://research-methodology.net/sampling-in-primary-data-collection/snowball-sampling/.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.

snowball sampling pertaining to my study was the possibility of oversampling a particular network of peers which could lead to bias. However, this risk seemed to have minor to no effect, as interviewees held different opinions, sometimes contradictory ones, and each interviewee had at least one interesting viewpoint not mentioned by others.

Those who chose to participate received a follow-up e-mail confirming the interview time, date and location. All of the interviews were conducted in person, except for one that was conducted over the phone. Interviews were recorded after each interviewee's consent (all except one respondent agreed to be recorded). After the interviews, my participants received a debrief/summary of the interview results via e-mail so that I could make any changes or clarifications to the transcriptions.

The study initially attempted to interview anywhere from 10 to 20 participants. I conducted 16 interviews and interviewed 17 respondents (1 interview included 2 members of the Winnipeg Police). Participants had the opportunity to withdraw from the research before a date that was indicated in the consent form. Withdrawal dates differed depending on the interview date and when the interview summary had been received by the interviewees. The goal was to give the interviewees enough time to review the summary. None of the participants withdrew from the study.

The interview questions had the following structure:

1. Awareness of the issue of radicalization: a) How well are you informed or aware of the issue of radicalization? b) How well do you think the community is aware about the issue?

2. Community involvement in preventing radicalization: a) Do you know of any community involvement in preventing/countering radicalization? b) Are you aware of any initiatives? c) Is

your organization involved (if you are a part of an organization)?? If yes, please elaborate on how, if not, are there any particular reasons for this? d) What in your opinion is working/not working? Why? e) What is your personal opinion regarding community involvement? Is it necessary? What are the benefits and challenges? Are there any drawbacks for the community?

3. Collaboration with governmental structures: a) Is there cooperation with the government on the issue? b) Is there any support or facilitation from governmental structures regarding the issue? c) Are there any complications regarding cooperating on the issue with governmental structures? d) Are there any suggestions to improve cooperation?

4. Any other additional information on the issue.

Participants had the opportunity to omit questions they did not wish to answer. As the interviews were semi-structured, they sometimes diverged from the suggested outline and took their own path.

**Limitations and Strengths.**

Some persistent limitations pertaining to research on terrorism resonate with this study: the explanatory gap problem, the primary data problem and the heterogeneity problem.[36] "The explanatory gap problem stems, in part, from a tendency to leap too readily from macro findings to micro implications"[37] suggesting why some individuals radicalize and others don't. There is a failure to use control groups and more comparison is needed to make any sound conclusions and generalizations. Since the first part of this research is based on a literature review, the researcher

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[36] Lorne L. Dawson and Paul Bramadat. *Religious Radicalization and Securitization in Canada and Beyond.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 2014), 66.
[37] Ibid.

needs to be aware of this issue and watch for any published findings and generalizations that may not have enough research to support them.

The heterogeneity issue refers to generalizing about potentially very different units of analysis. Terrorists can be broken down into various groups by subtypes, motivations, size of group, capacity, resources, as well as national composition and cultural background, etc.[38] Even homegrown terrorists can be broken down into subgroups, thus, for example, Canadian homegrown terrorists can display significant differences in terms of their radicalization to violence and what influences them when compared to European homegrown terrorists. Therefore, the researcher needs to be careful about any generalizations made about terrorists and the process of radicalization to violence of homegrown terrorists in Canada.

Another common challenge for terrorism studies is the primary data problem. The limited number of studies based on interviews due to various legal and security barriers, as well as issues of trust for both terrorists and researchers raises questions about the credibility of research done on the matter.[39] This study attempts to balance out literature based on secondary data with literature based on primary data.

Certain limitations lie within the case-study method as well. The case study requires the objectivity of the investigator in order to be sound. The researcher needs to be aware of the fact that the natural wish to have data support the hypothesis may bias collection and interpretation of

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[38] Dawson and Bramadat. *Religious Radicalization and Securitization in Canada and Beyond*, 68.
[39] Ibid.

the evidence.[40] Consequently, it is necessary for the researcher to set clear boundaries and goals in terms of data collection.

The case-study method can be an excellent tool for qualitative research and for gaining deep insight and detail about an issue. However, it also risks being just a "good story" rather than a concrete study. To avoid this, the researcher must set a clear thesis question and develop a hypothesis after the case study is done. The goals of the study must be clear from the outset and follow a specific line of argumentation.

Interviews can also pose several challenges and limit the results of the research. There is always a risk of potential interviewees declining to be interviewed. In the end, there may not be enough interviewees to produce any sound conclusions. Second, the potential participants of the interview process are stakeholders regarding the issue being researched. Since some potential participants are prominent community leaders, they may not wish to disclose all information for various reasons, primarily, because this may affect their communities and themselves. Ethical issues may arise as well – even though the names of interviewees aren't disclosed in the study, unless the participants themselves volunteer the information, it may be easy to draw conclusions from the information provided by these individuals regarding who they are and what position they hold within the Muslim community and the broader community in Winnipeg. This fact may also lead participants to be unwilling to disclose certain information so that they are not held liable for it afterwards.

Sensitivity of information is stipulated by the broader political context of Islamophobia and the Muslim community becoming the target community for counter-terrorism initiatives

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[40] Elizabethann O'Sullivan, Gary R. Rassel, and Maureen Berner, *Research Methods for Public Administrators*, (New York: Pearson Longman, 2008), 42.

after 9/11. The interviews took place slightly over a year after Bill C-51 was passed and less than a year after Canada's Federal elections in October 2015. Both events brought out concerns around Islamophobia within Canadian society. In the former case fears arouse that "under Bill C-51 Muslims can expect more discrimination when it comes to "false positive" terrorist cases.[41] In the latter case, the Conservatives government's proposal to ban face coverings at citizenship swearing-in ceremonies[42] raised questions regarding discrimination against Muslims.

Radicalization is often associated with terrorism (even if it is simply radicalization of the mind and not action), which is considered a significant security threat to Canada. Moreover, terrorism and radicalization are often associated with Islam and Muslims without valid reasons, especially in the media.  These two aspects make the matter of radicalization a sensitive one, especially within the Muslim community.  On the one hand, potential participants may be willing to cooperate on the issue and assist with this research, because they are stakeholders and may benefit from the study. On the other hand, due to the matter's sensitivity, potential participants may be extremely cautious about their participation in the study. They might not wish to disclose certain information and choose to withhold sensitive information, which could be significant for the study. The option for my research participants to stay anonymous should mitigate this to an extent. At any rate, even if valuable information is withheld, and my interviewees display

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[41] Amira Elghawaby, "Canadian Muslims Can Expect More Discrimination Under Bill C-51," *Huffington Post,* April 16, 2015, accessed July 30, 2017, http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/amira-elghawaby/discrimination-against-muslims_b_7071952.html.

[42] Laura Payton, "Election Issues 2015: A Maclean's Primer on the Niqab," *Maclean's,* October 6, 2015, accessed July 30, 2017, http://www.macleans.ca/politics/ottawa/election-issues-2015-a-macleans-primer-on-the-niqab/.

caution, then it becomes illustrative to the study and lends itself to further elaborations within the issue of countering radicalization to violence.

Regardless of the above-mentioned challenges to this research, there are several significant strengths that need to be highlighted. Primarily, this research employs a combination of tools and sources, which will potentially provide a fuller picture. The first part of the study, based on a literature review, sums up existing findings and approaches the matter from various perspectives and therefore facilitates a better understanding of the issue. Second, as the Winnipeg Case Study is primary data, and examines a unique local situation and a topic not yet studied, it may become a valuable contribution and advance existing knowledge. Third, semi-structured interviews permit for flexibility, which allows the interviewees to share opinions and understanding of the issue. Such flexibility may lead to discovering avenues for furthering research that haven't been initially considered by the researcher. This, in turn, may refine existing hypotheses and promote new ones.

Altogether, being mindful of possible limitations and challenges assists in decreasing their effect on the study, while utilizing the strengths should assist in advancing the thesis as it strives to add to the general discourse of countering radicalization to violence in Canada.

**The Winnipeg Case Study.**

"The scientific benefit of case study method lies in its ability to open the way for discoveries. It can easily serve as the breeding ground for insights and even hypotheses that may be pursued in subsequent studies."[43] Case study research via interviews is useful in framing political issues from the perspectives of the participants themselves. It provides access to first-hand information as well as an in-depth and detailed understanding of the issue researched. The case study I chose aimed to examine the role of community in countering radicalization to violence and was conducted in Winnipeg, from June to August 2016 with stakeholders in the Muslim and broader community.[44]

The initial intention was to interview solely Muslim community members and leaders as the researcher mistakenly assumed that the main contribution could be made primarily by the Muslim community. Nevertheless, as the interviews proceeded, this misconception began to fade. Other members of the broader Winnipeg community demonstrated both a stake and a significant role to play in addressing this issue. This role is different from that of the Muslim community, yet it is not any less important. In fact, the very first interviewee – a prominent Muslim community member[45] - suggested interviewing city Councillors who come in regular contact with the Muslim community. This expansion of the research subject resulted in a

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[43] Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences,* 329.

[44] A total of 15 interviews were conducted, which included 2 Muslim community leaders, 2 City councillors, 2 representatives of the Winnipeg Police (1 interview), 3 members of the Muslim community, 4 individuals who work in organizations assisting newcomers with their integration process (1 of which is a member of the Muslim community), Aaron Driver's lawyer, a professor in Islamic studies and a Master's student conducting research on radicalization. Participants were given the opportunity to remain anonymous due to sensitivity of the research topic.

[45] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 1 (Muslim community leader 1 and Muslim community leader 2 are used to differentiate between the two Muslim community leaders interviewed on June 30, 2016), June 30, 2016.

broadening of the definition of 'community' within the scope of this project. It also provided a deeper understanding of the 'role of community' through highlighting the different contributions community members can make.

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines community as "the people with common interests living in a particular area," as well as "a group of people with a common characteristic or interest living together within a larger society.[46] The Cambridge dictionary defines community as "the people living in one particular area or people who are considered as a unit because of their common interests, social group, or nationality."[47] The OSCE suggests that a "community might generally be though of as consisting of individuals, groups and institutions based in the same area and/or having shared interests."[48] It goes on to explain, that "[t]his can be interpreted in the sense that a community is a stakeholder group, concerned about particular issues, measures or policies."[49] In the American Journal of Public Heath, MacQueen and others define community as *"a group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in joint action in geographical locations or settings."*[50] However, Phil Bartel, viewing community from a sociological perspective, highlights that

> a community is not just the people who are in it. A community usually was already existing when all of its current residents were not yet born, and it will likely continue to

[46] Merriam-Webster, "Community," *Merriam-Webster Dictionary,* accessed July 30, 2017, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/community.

[47] Cambridge Dictionary, *Community,* Accessed July 30, 2017, http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/community.

[48] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach," 74.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Cathleen M. MacQueen, & al, "What is Community? An Evidence-Based Definition for Participatory Public Health," *Am J Public Health*, 91(2017), accessed September 19, 2017, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1446907/.

exist when all of the people in it have left. It is something that is beyond its very components, its residents or community members.[51]

Gerard Delanty – a British sociologist and Professor of Sociology and Social and Political thought at the University of Sussex – in his book 'Community,' explores major historical discourses of community in western thought and political practice. Delanty demonstrates how understanding and definition of community has changed over time, with the term expressing the essence of society from ancient Greeks to the Enlightenment era, whereas today community is seen as a total critique of the state.[52]

As can be seen, the term 'community' is both flexible and vague. It has numerous definitions varying between disciplines and schools of thought, which highlight different aspects essential to identifying a community. However, in our case, there are two key factors which define the 'broader Winnipeg community': common interests and location. Individuals belonging to this community are a) stakeholders in the issue of countering radicalization to violence; and b) reside in Winnipeg. The location factor may or may not have implications for the research results. The proposition is that each city has its own societal and cultural particularities, which could affect the way individuals treat a certain issue as well as the way the issue emerges. In fact, as suggested by both the UN[53] and the OSCE[54] terrorism always has a local dimension.

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[51] Phil Bartel, "What is Community? A Sociological Perspective," Community Empowerment Collective, accessed September 19, 2017, http://cec.vcn.bc.ca/cmp/whatcom.htm.

[52] Gerard Delanty, *Community,* (London: Routledge, 2003), 8-9.

[53] United Nations, *Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.* Report of Secretary-General, United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (2015), accessed July 30, 2017, https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism.ctitf/files/plan_action.pdf.

[54] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach."

It is worthy to note that Winnipeg does not have a long history of dealing with radicalization to violence in comparison to other cities across Canada such as Calgary, Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. According to the Canadian Incident DataBase, since 1960, only 9 terrorist attacks were reported in Winnipeg[55], in comparison to 34 in Calgary[56], 87 in Vancouver, 164 in Toronto[57] and 400 in Montreal[58]. Nevertheless, within the last decade there have been at least 2 Islamist extremist suspects from Winnipeg – one in 2010 and one in 2013 (both were reported by the Muslim community),[59] and most recently, in the summer of 2016, Aaron Driver's[60] case was added to this list. Winnipeg has a young, yet a growing Muslim population of 11,230 people (as per the most recent 2013 Census). Winnipeg has accepted 1,088 Syrian refugees since November 2015[61] and might welcome more. These two factors – a young growing Muslim community and a limited experience of dealing with radicalization to violence make Winnipeg a unique case to explore.

A broader understanding of community demonstrated that countering radicalization to violence is more than just a security issue. When my interviewees were asked about their

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[55] TSAS, *Canadian Incident Database,* http://extremism.ca/results.aspx?Pivot=Prov.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Holly Alexandruk, "Winnipeg Muslim Community Reaching Out to Suspected Extremist," *Global News,* March 6, 2015, accessed July 30, 2017, http://globalnews.ca/news/1869050/winnipeg-muslim-community-reaching-out-to-suspected-extremist/.
[60] Aaron Driver was a terrorist suspect from Winnipeg. He caught CSIS's attention in October 2014. In June 2015, he was arrested on a peace bond, 8 days later he was bailed out of jail on several conditions. In February 2016, although not facing criminal charges, he agreed to a peace bond limiting his activities. August 3rd, 2016 in Strathroy, Ontario, Driver was shot by police after he detonated a device in the back of a cab. It is unclear whether he died from the shooting or the explosion.
[61] Government of Canada, "Map of Destination Communities and Service Provider Organizations," May 01, 2017, Accessed July 30, 2017, http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/map.asp.

awareness of radicalization to violence, most expressed a deep concern with the issue, but not necessarily in terms of security. Instead, they saw radicalization to violence as having a direct impact on the everyday lives of both the Muslim community and the broader Winnipeg community.

Critical security studies have challenged conventional understanding of security. "To understand security from a broader perspective means to look at the ways in which the objects to be secured, the perceptions of threats to them, and the available means of securing them have shifted over time. New threats emerge; new enemies are created; erstwhile fellow citizens become objects of hatred and violence; former enemies can be transformed into members of the same community."[62] Radicalization to violence and terrorism are examples of issues that require a broader understanding of security than conventional social sciences can offer. "Security, as conventionally formulated, is about the protection of a political community of some sort, with community understood as a population with attributes in common."[63] However, since the end of Cold War and the demise of the bipolar security system, understanding of security has broadened, and the concept of threat has been redefined. Conventional security viewed threat as something foreign originating from the outside, whereas in the case of domestic radicalization to violence, the threat arises from within the community, often formed by various forces at play in society. Fortunately, the Government of Canada recognizes that countering radicalization to violence requires a multidimensional approach, which involves not only security forces (police, military) but also communities.[64] This case study shows that concomitant issues such as

[62] Booth, Ken. *Critical Security Studies and World Politics.* (Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2005), 50.
[63] Ibid, 9.
[64] TSAS. *Canadian Incident Database.* http://extremism.ca/results.aspx?Pivot=Prov.

Islamophobia, racism, foreign policy, newcomer integration and others are equally important when responding to radicalization to violence. As a matter of fact, these are the primary issues that affect everyday lives of individuals concerned with radicalization to violence.

Identifying how and through what avenues an individual becomes concerned with radicalization to violence was made possible only through conducting interviews. For some, this concern arises simply because of their Muslim identity (stipulated by terrorism often being associated with Islam after 9/11). Others relate to the issue through their professional endeavors, such as being a lawyer in a case of a radicalized individual (Mr. Tailleur), being charged with ensuring security in the city (the Winnipeg Police), or assisting immigrants and refugees with the integration process (support workers). Exploring these different vantage points assists in viewing the issue of countering radicalization with more depth. Although the issue of radicalization to violence impacts participants of the study differently, the fact that there was universal care about the issue indicates that it is indeed an important one to study.

Another aspect of the interview process that needs to be considered is the position (insider vs. outsider) and identity of the interviewer. There are both advantages and disadvantages to being either an insider or an outsider researcher. Outsider researchers are valued as detached and neutral observers, with more objectivity, yet are presumed to never quite understand a culture or a situation if they have not experienced it.[65] Insiders, on the other hand, are uniquely positioned to understand the experiences of groups in which they are members.

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[65] Katie Kerstetter, "Insider, Outsider, or Somewhere in Between: The Impact of Researchers' Identities on the Community-Based Research Process," *Journal of Rural Social Sciences* (Southern Rural Sociological Association), 27 (2012): 100. accessed July 30, 2017. http://journalofruralsocialsciences.org/pages/Articles/JRSS%202012%2027/2/JRSS%202012%2027%202%2099-117.pdf.

However, they might find it difficult to separate their personal experiences from those of research participants, confront questions about potential bias in their research, and face issues of confidentiality when interviewing members of their community about sensitive subjects.[66] "There are few cases … in which someone can be characterized as a complete outsider or insider. In practice, researchers' identities are often relative, and can sometimes even change, based on where and when the research is conducted, the personalities of the researcher and individual research participants, and the topic of the research."[67] It is also argued that even though an outsider's understanding will differ from that of an insider, it is not a priori erroneous, nor is there only one kind of understanding – understandings may diverge among insiders as well.[68] As I accessed the Winnipeg Muslim and the broader Winnipeg community through my interviews, I experienced being in both positions. When interviewing members of the broader Winnipeg community I considered myself an insider, while during interviews with members of the Muslim community I felt as an outsider. Further, as my understanding of the issue grew with each interview, my status gradually shifted towards that of an insider.

I began my interviews by providing some personal background details of my triple identity (Russian-Canadian born in Ukraine) and disclosing the broader goal of this research – contributing to the multicultural dialogue. This transparency was intended to promote understanding of the researcher's position as well as to make interviewees feel more comfortable. As a woman with a Caucasian appearance I was worried that I would be perceived by the Muslim community members as an 'outsider' with a political agenda, which may not

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[66] Katie Kerstetter, "Insider, Outsider, or Somewhere in Between: The Impact of Researchers' Identities on the Community-Based Research Process," 100.
[67] Ibid, 101.
[68] Ibid.

sympathize with theirs. However, my identity seemed to have a reverse effect. It appeared that the identity of the researcher reinforced the willingness of those participants who identify as Muslims to voice their opinions and be heard by the 'outsiders'.

Although the research theme was sensitive, participants were eager to share their experiences and opinions. However, sometimes they requested that I not include certain remarks in the thesis. Although they are excluded, these viewpoints/experiences nonetheless, significantly assisted in framing the researcher's understanding of the issue and have been taken into account in the analysis of information drawn from the interviews. Such candid moments during the interviews suggest 2 things: 1) interviewees had a level of comfort during the interview, which supports the assumption that interviewees disclosed honest opinions; and 2) the issue is a sensitive one and is also politically charged for most of my respondents.

Since the interviews were semi-structured and the grounded theory approach was applied, analyses of the data focused on identifying common themes as well as similarities and differences of ideas, perceptions and views. The themes that emerged were the following: reasons and factors for radicalization to violence, addressing reasons for radicalization to violence, the role of religion, terminology, newcomers, the role of community and collaboration with government structures. These themes are elaborated on in Chapter 5.

Overall the interview process was positive both in terms of interactions with the participants and in terms of the data produced. Participants placed value in the interview process, encouraged additional research and expressed the need for more discussion and dialogue on the issue.

**Chapter 3. Placing in Broader Context.**

This chapter explains why exploring the role of community in countering radicalization is relevant today and how it came to my attention. It provides context to the research question and presents current debates around the topic. Also, in this chapter I present the main commitments of Critical Terrorism Studies which served as the theoretical framework for my research.

**Contextualization**

Canada's first ever Counter-terrorism Strategy, set out in 2011,[69] and two consecutive Public Reports on the Terrorist Threat to Canada (2013[70] and 2014[71]) are based on "four mutually reinforcing elements: prevent, detect, deny and respond."[72] The prevention arm of this strategy has come to play a major role in countering violent extremism in Canada and "focuses primarily on building partnerships with groups and individuals in Canadian communities."[73] The Strategy states that "working closely with local-level partners will help foster a better understanding of preventative and intervention methods to stop the process of radicalization leading to violence."[74] Communities are believed to be best suited for countering radicalization

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[69] Government of Canada, *Building Resilience Against Terrorism: Canada's Counter-Terrorism Strategy.*
[70] Public Safety Canada, *2013 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada.*
[71] Public Safety Canada, *2014 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada.*
[72] Government of Canada, *Building Resilience Against Terrorism: Canada's Counter-Terrorism Strategy,* 2.
[73] Ibid, 16.
[74] Government of Canada, *Building Resilience Against Terrorism: Canada's Counter-Terrorism Strategy,* 16.

to violence for the following reasons: they can exercise community policing;[75] parents, teachers

and community leaders can debunk radical propaganda;[76] they can provide intelligence;[77] they

can recognize radicalization at an earlier stage than security agencies; provide counter ideology

by empowering community leaders to speak out against violent extremists and their ideas;[78] and

provide alternative solutions to dealing with grievances and assist in channeling thoughts and

ideas in a non-violent direction.

Nevertheless, the strategy of community involvement also poses a number of challenges.

A major question that emerges from past experiences of cooperation with the community is –

"which partners in the local community do you choose for collaboration?"[79] Governments in the

UK and Germany have chosen partners that were not representative of the "moderate",

mainstream Muslim community, but instead were found to have been linked to extremist

networks abroad, often turning out to be part of the problem rather than part of the solution.[80] On

the other hand, there are claims that engagement is often led by the imperatives of government,

which allow for the inclusion of only certain sections of Muslim communities.[81] Therefore,

"legitimate Muslims are perceived to be those who engage with governments on the terms set by

the governments. Those Muslims who refuse such an engagement (irrespective of their

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[75] Parent and Ellis III, *Countering Radicalization of Diaspora Communities in Canada,* 74.
[76] Ibid, 57.
[77] Richard Jackson, "Counter-Terrorism and Communities: An Interview with Robert Lambert," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 1 (2008), 294, accessed July 30, 2017. doi:10.1080/17539150802184678.
[78] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 57.
[79] Ibid, 59.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Basia Spalek and Robert Lambert, "Muslim Communities, Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Radicalisation: A Critically Reflective Approach to Engagement," *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice,* (2008): 260, accessed July 30, 2017, doi:10.1016/j.ijlcj.2008.08.004.

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motivations or reasons) are likely to be perceived as 'radical' and hence a potential terrorist threat."[82] Another issue is drawing the line between empowering the communities to make societies stronger and actually charging them with responsibilities similar to those of security agencies. Community policing can undermine trust that individuals have in their community leaders, teachers and other figures, if the latter are charged with an obligation to inform security services of behaviour that may seem suspicious or radical ideas voiced by these individuals.

Empowering communities to provide counter-ideology is also a dubious subject. Forcese and Roach argue that the radical thought itself may not cause harm; it is the violent actions that must be countered. In fact, radical thoughts have brought development to democratic institutions throughout history.[83] "Violent extremism is not, in other words, the inevitable, or even likely, product of ideological radicalization."[84] "The connection between radical and extremist ideas and an actual willingness to engage in terrorist violence is tenuous, even non-existent."[85] Thus, empowering communities to promote only moderate ideas may be the wrong approach. Instead, consideration should be given to empowering communities to channel radical thoughts in non-violent actions. "Advancing democratically acceptable solutions to grievances" may be a more viable solution.[86] Regardless of the challenges and issues posed by the strategy of community involvement, it does seem to be the most effective measure, as it both targets the roots of radicalization to violence and helps to prevent the threat rather than deal with it after the fact.

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[82] Basia Spalek and Robert Lambert, "Muslim Communities, Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Radicalisation: A Critically Reflective Approach to Engagement," 262.
[83] Craig Forcese and Kent Roach, *False Security: The Radicalization of Canadian Anti-Terrorism,* (Ottawa: Irwin Law, 2015), 459.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid, 464.

Even though community involvement requires heavy resources, such as scholarly research, government funding, tailored social services, political debates and policy development, - in the long-term it should make communities more resilient to the terrorism threat. Thus, this thesis explores the role of community in countering homegrown radicalization based on a Winnipeg case study and its Muslim and broader communities. The focus of the study is primarily on the Muslim community because terrorism and radicalization is often associated with Islam. This is not to say that linking terrorism and radicalization to Islam is a justified option. One should be aware that across Canada radicalization happens in numerous communities and diasporas and is by no means unique to the Muslim community.[87]

**Theoretical Framework.**

This thesis uses Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) as a guide for its theoretical framework. CTS is a relatively new approach having emerged during the 1970s and becoming more widespread after the 9/11 attacks. Considering its relatively recent emergence and the fact that it is still undergoing changes and is therefore susceptible to shortcomings, CTS is not applied as a set outline for this thesis. Rather, it is used as a guide to navigate research in accordance with CTS's commitments.

CTS's first commitment is allowing multiple perspectives as well as disciplinary and intellectual pluralism.[88] Accordingly, this thesis aims to promote a multidisciplinary approach to

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[87] Parent and Ellis III, *Countering Radicalization of Diaspora Communities in Canada,* 11-12.
[88] Richard Jackson, "Why We Need Critical Terrorism Studies," *E-International Relations,* (2008), accessed July 30, 2017, http://www.e-ir.info/2008/04/08/why-we-need-critical-terrorism-studies/.

countering radicalization to violence, as well as exposing different perspectives, and most importantly, the possibility, if not necessity, of their coexistence.

The second commitment of CTS is to view 'terrorism' as a social fact, the nature of which is dependent upon context, circumstances, intentions and crucially, social, cultural, legal and political processes of interpretation, categorisation and labelling.[89] CTS scholars emphasize that 'terrorist' should not be just a label, because it is not an identity like 'Canadian' or 'Christian' as well as it should not be seen as 'once a terrorist, always a terrorist'.[90] A more careful approach is proposed for using both terms 'terrorist' and 'terrorism'. As much as the term 'terrorism' is not contested within this study, an important debate on radicalization vs. radicalization to violence will take place to make significant clarifications and avoid misleading categorization and labelling.

The third commitment is to shift from the central concern of State security to the security and freedom of a human being. By no means does this imply that the State should disappear from the focus of research. Rather, CTS advocates for defining legitimacy by whether an act or an organisation improves the well-being of people[91] This aspect is crucial in determining measures for countering radicalization to violence and terrorism as the emphasis should be placed not on 'fighting some evil' but on providing security for society while maintaining necessary freedoms. When emphasis is placed on 'fighting an evil' we end up with methods, such as the war on terror, which eventually proves not only unproductive, but counterproductive.

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[89] Richard Jackson, Marie Breen Smyth, and Jeroen Gunning, *Critical Terrorism Studies. A New Research Agenda,* (London: Routledge, 2009), 222.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid, 223.

A consequence of the ontological and epistemological positions that the CTS scholars have adopted is advocacy for the transparency of the researcher's own values and standpoints. This commitment takes its roots from Critical Theory, which believes in the relationship between the subject and the object and their influence on each other, thus contradicting the positivist understanding of objectivity. Transparency is important in the sense that the values and viewpoints that the researcher comes with impact the research and the outcome, which consequently could influence the outcome of politics and the wider society. This transparency aspect leads to an additional commitment of engaging in primary research and avoiding secondary, unverified and often biased sources. As for primary vs. secondary sources, this thesis lies somewhere in between. Many secondary sources constitute the basis of this research, as it builds on extant knowledge and findings. Nonetheless, the study attempts to advance this knowledge through primary sources via conducting interviews (the Winnipeg Case Study). The researcher is also aware and transparent in her values and standpoints, that is made clear throughout the thesis.

Related to the transparency commitment is one of adherence to responsible research ethics, which take into account the end-use of research. CTS scholars recognise that the outcome of their research may have impact on the informants, the 'suspect communities' from which terrorists often emerge, and the populations that bear the brunt of terrorist campaigns and counterterrorism policies.[92] Being aware of this responsibility was a difficult and sensitive part of this thesis. As part of my study concentrates specifically on the Winnipeg Muslim community, as a researcher, I strived to a) not make generalizations where they are not applicable; b) relay the

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[92] Jackson, Smyth and Gunning, *Critical Terrorism Studies. A New Research Agenda,* 226.

stories of respondents in order to primarily voice their opinions rather than support my own point of view; and c) adhere to ethics of confidentiality.

CTS introduces the concept of reflexivity that is central to this study. As the government and scholarly research promote community involvement in countering radicalization to violence, it is important to hear the voices, opinions, and views of the community, and to allow for this reflection.

**Conclusion**

As can be seen, the Government of Canada has identified the need for community involvement in countering radicalization to violence, yet it is by no means an easy task. Not only does it require heavy resources, but it also poses a lot of dubious questions. The debates that arise around community involvement need to be understood and clarified. Adhering to CTS's commitments in exploring the issue should be useful in clarifying these debates and learning more about the issue at hand. Reviewing existing findings and literature on the issue of radicalization to violence and the role of community will assist with providing a better understanding of the main debates, making necessary clarification, as well as identifying areas that are still vague and require more research and experience. This is addressed in the following chapter.

**Chapter 4. Making Distinctions, Breaking Stereotypes and Filling in the Gaps.**

"There's never been an act since the beginning from a kid stealing candy to a dictator committing genocide, that the person doing it didn't feel justified. That's a mental trick called rationalizing, and it's done the human race more harm than good."

Leigh Brackett, The Long Tomorrow.

As much as the terrorists' morality goes directly against that of mainstream society, and the horrific acts of violence committed by terrorists urge one to condemn a terrorist a madman, alas, the act of terrorism is a rational choice. Understanding the justification for terrorism, as unnatural as it may seem to a peace-loving person, is an essential key to preventing radicalization to violence. Accepting the idea that a terrorist is a normal, rational individual with aspirations for a better future and society, while being adamant regarding the unacceptance of violence as a means of achieving one's goals, is the stance we ought to take if we desire to both understand and circumvent radicalization to violence. In this chapter, I make some necessary clarifications regarding what radicalization to violence is and what it isn't, as well as highlight areas of debate that are ambiguous and therefore should be treated accordingly.

This chapter establishes a framework for the Winnipeg case study by summarizing key aspects that are already known about radicalization to violence and terrorism and preventing them. Information found here is based on a literature review and provides an account of the published research pertaining to countering radicalization to violence. It highlights some of the major scholars and their work in the field and gives an overview of their input.  It also shows

some of the major debates and contesting points of view in scholarly discussions around countering radicalization to violence.

This chapter elaborates on reasons and factors of radicalization to violence, the distinction between radicalization that leads to violence vs. radicalization that does not lead to violence, the place of religion, community policing and community involvement.

**Reasons and factors for radicalization to violence vs. terrorist profiling.**

It is, yet, unclear what that "tipping point" is that moves a radicalized individual to commit an act of terrorism, and it seems this discovery is unlikely to happen. Since we are complex creatures influenced by a variety of factors both within and outside us – psychology, physiology, previous experiences, mental health, upbringing, surrounding society, social factors, and political environment - there is always a handful of reasons why one becomes radicalized to violence. Moreover, the array of factors varies from one case to another. In other words, "there is no such thing as a typical terrorist."[93] Also, the conundrum of why only one individual in many with similar influencing factors becomes radicalized to violence has yet to be solved. "…[G]iven that so many people are exposed to the presumed generating conditions for terrorism (or root causes), the triggering factors and catalysts both for religious and political mobilization, why is it that so relatively few people actually do this (even within conflict zones, let alone outside of them)?"[94]

OSCE research suggests that "profiles built on stereotypical assumptions based on religion, race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, etc. are not only discriminatory, but are

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[93] Barlett, Birdwell and King, *The Edge of Violence: A Radical Approach to Extremism,* 7.

[94] Horgan, "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism," 83.

also ineffective."[95]  John Horgan concurs that attempting to find this "profile" or construct a

terrorist profile is to an extent harmful, since "when we assume static qualities of the terrorist (a

feature of profiles) we become blind to the qualities of the dynamics that shape and support the

development of the terrorist."[96] "We also obscure the basis from which a more practical

counterterrorism strategy might develop to prevent or control the extent of those who initially

become involved in terrorism."[97]

The absence of a terrorist profile or a pathway to violent extremism may seem to

discourage people from even hoping that there is a solution to the problem, however this should

not be the case. Horgan suggests "it might be useful to identify predisposing risk factors for

involvement in terrorism as a prelude to some form of risk assessment for prediction of

involvement."[98] He proposes the following risk factors:

1. The presence of some emotional vulnerability, in terms of feelings of anger,
   alienation (often synonymous with feelings of being culturally uprooted or displaced
   and a longing for a sense of community), and disenfranchisement.

2. Dissatisfaction with their current activity, whether it be political or social protest, and
   the perception that conventional political activity just does not work or produce
   results.

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[95] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach," 20.
[96] Horgan, "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism," 84.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.

3. Identification with victims—either real, in terms of personal victimization (e.g., by the military or police) or less tangible. For European Muslims who become involved in violent jihad, this identification is with Palestinian victims of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, victims in Iraq, or the conflict in Kashmir.

4. Believing that engaging in violence against the state or its symbols is not inherently immoral.

5. Also important is a sense of reward that the recruit has about what "being in this movement" represents. All suicide bombers, across the world, have one thing in common. They come to believe that they will achieve more in death than they ever could in life, a very powerful motivating factor not only in initial recruitment but also in terms of sustaining that person's commitment to the movement once a member.

6. Finally, kinship or other social ties to those experiencing similar issues, or already involved, are crucial. (pp. 84-85)

Horgan acknowledges that there could be other numerous factors, yet the above "provide a powerful framework for what could be termed 'openness to socialization' into terrorism."[99] He also notes that "these factors are only potent at one very specific juncture: the phase of initially becoming involved. Once the potential recruit begins to move toward the potential of belonging to a group (before engaging in terrorist events), a different set of factors begin to exert unique influence."[100] Predisposing risk factors are an important aspect to consider when developing preventative measures for countering radicalization to violence.

Another important aspect is highlighted in Schmid's study, which suggests that

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[99] Horgan, "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism," 84.
[100] Ibid, 85.

the study of root causes was for a long-time considered to be politically incorrect in many Western government quarters….[T]he drawback of such a bow to political correctness, however, has been that the focus of most government-sponsored research has been very much on 'vulnerable' youths who have somehow been 'radicalised' and recruited by terrorist organisations and turned into killers…... [S]uch a micro-level and person-centered approach deflects attention from the role of wider spectrum of factors, including the generally repressive policies many governments in the countries of origin of radicalised men and Arab and Muslim perceptions regarding the intentions and policies of the United States.[101]

Schmid's exhortation for analysis of the root causes of radicalization to violence and terrorism on meso- and macro-levels has implications for this thesis. As advocated by Schmid, the micro-level refers to the individual level, involving such aspects as identity problems, failed integration, feelings of alienation, marginalisation, discrimination, relative deprivation, humiliation, stigmatisation and rejection, often combined with moral outrage and feelings of revenge.[102] The meso-level refers to the "wider radical milieu – the supportive or even complicit social surround which serves as a rallying point and is the missing link' with the terrorists' broader constituency or reference group that is aggrieved and suffering injustices which, in turn, can radicalise parts of a youth cohort and lead to the formation of terrorist organisations."[103] Finally, the macro-level is the "role of government and society at home and abroad, the radicalisation of public opinion and party politics, tense majority – minority relationships, especially when it comes to foreign diasporas, and the role of lacking socio-economic opportunities for whole sectors of society, which leads to mobilisation and radicalisation of the discontented, some of which might take the form of terrorism."[104]

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[101] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 3.
[102] Ibid, 4.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.

He explains that "[t]he third level of analysis deals inter alia with government actions at home and abroad and society's relationship with members of minorities, especially diaspora migrants, who are caught between two cultures, leading some to rebel against the very society that hosts them."[105] Canada's multicultural society and the constant influx of newcomers makes the third level of analysis extremely important to account for when dealing with countering radicalization to violence.

As concluded, there is no single path to radicalization to violence and there is a variety of influences that result in an individual's choice to become a terrorist. Nevertheless, there are several generalizations that can be made about radicalization towards terrorism.[106] Schmid summed up that: 1) most terrorists are clinically normal (however, the rate of individuals with psychological disorders among lone-wolf terrorists as compared to group terrorists is significantly higher.); 2) the backgrounds of terrorists are very diverse; 3) the radicalization to violence is mostly a gradual process*[107], nevertheless it may seem very quick and sudden to security forces, because "only the last observed phase might be fast when at last a dangerous person comes to the notice of intelligence agencies"[108]; 4) individual poverty alone does not cause radicalization towards terrorism but un(der)employment may play a role; 5) grievances play a role but mostly as a mobilization device rather than as a personal experience; 6) social networks and environments are crucial to drawing vulnerable youths to a terrorist movement; 7) ideology often plays an important role in that it can provide the true believer with a 'license to

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[105] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 4.
[106] Ibid, 20.
[107] As mentioned in "Conceptualization," it is debated whether radicalization to violence is a process. The main point here is that radicalization to violence is gradual and not sudden.
[108] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 23.

kill'; and 8) disengagement from terrorism often occurs without de-radicalization[109] (important to note for distinguishing between radicalization and radicalization to violence).

Injustice is another prominent component in the process of one becoming a violent extremist. Nevertheless, it is not always the case that a terrorist feels injustice towards oneself. What is particularly noticeable is that terrorist groups sometimes adopt someone else's grievances and become self-appointed champions of a cause other than their own. "Such 'vicarious grievances' are based on altruistic feelings whereby one identifies with the fate of an adopted constituency and acts on its behalf."[110] This is extremely important for research on homegrown terrorists in Canada. An individual may be living in good social and economic conditions, and not necessarily experiencing injustice personally, however, altruistic feelings and the ability to relate to and/or identify with those they consider being treated unjustly, would provoke political grievances and motivate radicalization to violence.

Perceived injustices and the options one considers available for overcoming them are key in understanding the psychological process of radicalization to violence. As Fathali M. Moghaddam suggests - "terrorism can best be understood through a focus on the psychological interpretation of material conditions and the options seen to be available to overcome perceived injustices, particularly those in the procedures through which decisions are made."[111] To explain the psychological process that leads to radicalization to violence, Moghaddam uses the staircase metaphor. This narrowing staircase consists of 5 stages/floors and leads to the terrorist act at the

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[109] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 20.
[110] Ibid, 26.
[111] Fathali M. Moghaddam, "The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration," *American Psychologist* 60 (2005): 161.

top of a building.[112] The main point is not how many floors or stages there are, "but how people perceive the building and the doors they think are open to them."[113] "As individuals climb the staircase they see fewer and fewer choices, until the only possible outcome is the destruction of others, or oneself, or both."[114]

"On the ground floor, perceptions of fairness and feelings of relative deprivation dominate."[115] What is particularly important at this stage is the perception of fairness and justice, since among the vast population who occupy the ground floor only some from the disgruntled population will climb to the first floor in search of solutions.[116] Moghaddam makes reference to Runciman's distinction between egoistical deprivation (an individual is deprived because of his/her position in the group) and fraternal deprivation (feelings of deprivation that arise because of the position of an individual's group relative to that of others).[117] This distinction is important, as "fraternal deprivation, under certain conditions, is a better predictor of feelings of discontent among minorities that is egoistic deprivation."[118]

On the first floor, individuals try to find solutions to greater justice. "But if they do not see possibilities for individual mobility and do not feel that they can adequately influence the procedures through which decisions are made, they are more likely to keep climbing."[119] The second floor is characterized by anger and frustration of those who continue to perceive grave

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[112] Fathali M. Moghaddam, "The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration," *American Psychologist* 60 (2005): 161.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid, 162.
[117] Ibid, 163.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid, 162.

injustices and a displacement of aggression onto an enemy. Those who are prone to physically displace aggression onto enemies climb further up the staircase where they become deeply engaged in a morality that condones terrorism.[120] The third floor is where moral engagement occurs and justification of terrorist actions takes place. Terrorists are considered "morally disengaged" from the perspective of the mainstream, yet from the perspective of terrorist organizations, it is vice versa: terrorists are "morally engaged," while "enemy" governments and their agents are morally disengaged.[121] On the third floor, potential terrorists "find themselves engaged in the extremist morality of isolated, secretive organizations dedicated to changing the world by any means available to them."[122]

The fourth floor is where solidification of categorical thinking and the perceived legitimacy of the terrorist organization happens. At this stage, there is almost no opportunity to withdraw.[123] There are two pathways for recruits at this stage – those who will be relatively long-term members and become part of small cells, and those who become "foot soldiers" recruited to carry out violent attacks and to become suicide bombers (the entire operation of recruitment, training, and implementation of the terrorist act in some operations may take no more than 24 hours). Solidification of a categorical us-versus-them worldview is one of the hallmarks of terrorist organizations and the individuals attracted to them.[124] Nevertheless, this simplistic polarization is not only intrinsic to terrorists. "Just as Islamic fundamentalists have labeled the United States the 'Great Satan,' leading evangelical Christians in the United States have backed

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[120] Fathali M. Moghaddam, "The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration," *American Psychologist* 60 (2005): 163-165.
[121] Ibid, 165.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid.

the view that "Islam was founded by… a demon possessed pedophile."[125] This us-versus-them thinking from the West has played into the hands of fundamentalists abroad, particularly some strands within Saudi Wahhabism, and the radical form of Shi'a Islam, as represented by Hezbollah in Iran and Lebanon, for example."[126]

"On the last floor – the fifth – specific individuals are selected and trained to sidestep inhibitory mechanisms that could prevent them from injuring and killing both others and themselves, and those selected are equipped and sent to carry out terrorist acts."[127]

Moghaddam's staircase model mainly refers to terrorists from North African and Middle Eastern countries. Nevertheless, it has important implications for the study of homegrown Islamist extremists in Canada, the US, and the EU, and his exhortation for concentrating on preventative methods for USA's foreign policy is just as relevant for Canada's counter-terrorism policy at home. Moghaddam suggests that "[a]s long as conditions on the ground floor remain the same, every terrorist who is eliminated is quickly replaced by others."[128] These ground conditions may be quite different for those living in North African and Middle Eastern countries, as opposed to those living in the Western world. Nevertheless, perceptions of injustice and deprivation – either egoistical or fraternal - are the common denominator in both cases, which explains the psychological process of individuals radicalizing to violence. Therefore, addressing these ground conditions is just as important in Canada, as it is in North African and Middle Eastern countries. The staircase metaphor also highlights the correlation between each

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[125] Fathali M. Moghaddam, "The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration," *American Psychologist* 60 (2005): 165.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid, 162.
[128] Ibid, 167.

stage/floor and the difficulty of preventing radicalization to violence. As the individual's view

becomes more narrow-minded regarding options available to resolve their grievances, the more

difficult it becomes to challenge these perceptions and therefore prevent radicalization to

violence. This knowledge is valuable for developing counter-radicalization programs in Canada.

The role of society in one becoming radicalized to violence is highlighted by Barlett et al

as follows "[t]he spread and acceptance of radical or violent ideas can be helpfully conceived as

a social epidemic, because whether an individual comes to accept such ideas depends on how far

their peers do and the extent to which they are seen as worthy of imitation. Those who turned to

violence often followed a path of radicalisation, which was characterised by a culture of

violence, in-group peer pressure, and an internal code of honour where violence can be a route to

accruing status."[129] Horgan[130] also emphasizes the need to "identify the significance of the group

and organizational context that maintains involvement and sustains behavior and eventually

contributes to the commission of acts of terrorism."[131] Schmid similarly concludes that "[t]he

importance of social networks and enabling environments has now been widely

acknowledged."[132]

It is also necessary to distinguish between push and pull factors at play on the path of
radicalization to violence.

> "Push factors are the negative social, cultural, and political features of one's social
> environment that aid in 'pushing' vulnerable individuals onto the path of violent
> extremism. Push factors are commonly known as 'underlying/root causes' such as
> poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, discrimination, and political/economical
> marginalization. Pull factors, on the other hand, are the positive characteristics and
> benefits of an extremist organisation that 'pull' vulnerable individuals to join (the group's

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[129] Barlett, Birdwell and King, *The Edge of Violence: A Radical Approach to Extremism,* 12.

[130] Horgan, "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on
Radicalization into Terrorism," 81.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion
and Literature Review*, 26.

ideology, strong bonds of brotherhood and a sense of belonging, reputation building, prospect of fame or glory, and other socialization benefits)."[133]

Counter-radicalization efforts can target both push and pull factors, yet require different methods, thus making this distinction important.

As far as there is no single terrorist profile and no specific pathway to radicalization to violence, knowledge of what contributes to one becoming a terrorist, such as predisposing factors, the role of social structures, push and pull factors, and various levels of analyses of root causes, clarifies the task of countering violent extremism through preventative measures and assists with targeting specific aspects of radicalization to violence.

**The Role of Internet.**

The Internet plays a significant part in radicalization to violence since it acts as a facilitator. However, it is important to understand that it is not a cause in itself. Indeed, the way Halopeau describes the "radicalization process on the Internet" leads one to conclude that it is a strong enabler of radicalization to violence. He explains that "Internet users or terrorist sympathizers are initially attracted to the terrorist environment through video sharing websites such as YouTube where videos showing terrorist attacks are displayed. The YouTube accounts refer to a URL of a terrorist forum where people can click to access the forum, and they can join the forum by sending an email to its administrators."[134] When the "junior member" joins the forum, they are tested to fulfill basic tasks, then assessed and, based on good results, granted a higher rank ("member," "confirmed member," "senior member," etc.) and more privileges, such

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[133] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 26.

[134] Babak Akghar, Andrew Staniforth, and Francesca Bosco. *Cyber Crime and Cyber Terrorism Investigator's Handbook.* (Elsevier Science, 2014), 125.

as to administer newcomers on the forum.[135] "After a certain time one of the top administrators will ask the "senior member" to meet physically in order to further assess and validate that person as a good candidate. Following this crucial meeting the "new recruit" is introduced to a very small network of much radicalized individuals via VoIP such as Skype or Paltalk. This is where the candidate is entrusted with sensitive information, including where attacks are planned or targets designated."[136]

Wadhwa and Bathia suggest that "individuals generally appear to begin the radicalization (to violence) process on their own. Invariably, as they progress through the stages of radicalization, they seek like-minded individuals. This leads to the creation of groups or clusters. These clusters appear almost essential to progressing to the next stage of radicalization. Thus, we have ''virtual radical communities'' arising or evolving in online social networks..."[137] Therefore, "the Internet today provides more opportunities to become radicalized because of its features such as mass reachability, anonymization, and ease of use."[138] "A number of studies point to the Internet's ability to ''reach'' those individuals who, otherwise, would not have been reachable by radicalizers in any other way.

Forcese and Roach also point in the same direction. They make reference to an Internal Public Safety Analysis that reports that "there is little actual evidence that the Internet plays a dominant role in radicalization. More likely it has a facilitating and enabling role, such as in

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[135] Babak Akghar, Andrew Staniforth, and Francesca Bosco. *Cyber Crime and Cyber Terrorism Investigator's Handbook.* (Elsevier Science, 2014), 125.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Pooja Wadhwa and M. P. S. Bhatia. "An Approach for Dynamic Identification of Online Radicalization in Social Networks." *Cybernetics and Systems: An International Journal* (Taylor & Francis Group, LLC) (2015): 2. doi:10.1080/01969722.2015.1058665.
[138] Ibid, 3.

maintaining network contacts and reinforcing ideological messages that have already been

internalised by their audiences. Face-to-face human contact appears to remain crucial to

recruitment and the group dynamics that can drive radicalization, at least radicalization to

violence.[139] Altogether "online propaganda or fiery preachers might prime an individual toward a

certain way of thinking, but seem secondary to real-life relationships when it comes to violent

radicalization."[140] Moreover, Forcese and Roach suggest that "while the Internet alone may not

be a cause of radicalization to violence, it may serve as a driver and enabler for the process of

radicalization, a forum for radicalizing propaganda, a venue for social networking with the like –

minded, and, then a means of data-mining during the turn toward violence."[141]

It is very likely, that without the Internet, numerous individuals would have not

radicalized to violence, simply because they would have not been exposed to terrorist

propaganda nor had a way of connecting with like-minded individuals. However, since the

Internet has become an integral part of our everyday lives, our only option is being aware of its

negative impacts and finding alternative routes to mitigating consequences. Censorship of

terrorist propaganda and forums is difficult to enable due to censorship laws and technical

difficulties, however, there have been successful arrests of forum administrators. Yet, terrorist

organizations learned to circumvent this through dividing administration among several

administrators, so that forums could continue their existence even if one administrator has been

arrested. [142] Either way, censorship is not a likely solution to the problem of terrorist propaganda.

What could be a solution, is online counterpropaganda from credible individuals such as those

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[139] Forcese and Roach, *False Security: The Radicalization of Canadian Anti-Terrorism,* 462.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid.

disillusioned with terrorist ideology and terrorist organizations. Overall, as it is unlikely that terrorist propaganda will disappear from the Internet in any foreseeable future, it might be helpful to begin with raising awareness about it within communities, particularly among youth, who have lately been the primary target of ISIS recruiters.

**Radicalization that leads to violence vs. radicalization that does not lead to violence.**

As discussed in Chapter One, being a radical does not imply carrying out or support of violent actions, nor does it imply being on the path to terrorism. "…[T]o be a radical is to reject the status quo, but not necessarily in a violent or even problematic manner."[143] "The process of radicalisation is obviously a problem when it leads to violence, and most obviously to al-Qaeda (and ISIS) inspired terrorism. But the last decade in particular has also seen a growth in many types of nonviolent radicalisation. A successful counter-terrorism strategy must be based on a clear understanding of these distinct forms of radicalisation."[144]

Radicalization to violence "is a process by which individuals come to undertake terrorist activity, or directly aid or abet terrorism."[145] "Radicalisation that does not lead to violence ('non-violent radicalisation') refers to the process by which individuals come to hold radical views in relation to the status quo but do not undertake, or directly aid or abet terrorist activity."[146] Barlett et al, also suggest that "targeting the wrong people can breed resentment and alienation, and

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[143] Barlett, Birdwell and King, *The Edge of Violence: A Radical Approach to Extremism,* 7.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid,8.
[146] Ibid.

erode the very freedoms Western governments want to preserve. Violent radicals are clearly enemies of liberal democracies; but non-violent radicals might sometimes be powerful allies."[147]

Barlett et al, conducted a study with terrorists (those convicted of terrorism activities), radicals (holding radical views, yet not willing to resort to violence and not supporting violence in the West, however, some supporting fighting in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, etc. as a part of just war), and young Muslims. Their study sought to "cast light on how and why some types of radicalisation can develop into violence, while others do not, how they relate to each other, and what implications this has for social and security policy.[148] The findings showed that despite similarities between young Muslims, radicals, and terrorists in having experienced some degree of social exclusion, in their hatred towards foreign policy, distrust of government, feeling of disconnection from their local community and an identity crisis of some sort, young Muslims and radicals felt genuine affection for Western values of tolerance and pluralism while terrorists were unique in their loathing of Western society and culture.[149] Also, "radicals were more likely than terrorists to have been involved in political protest, to have studied at university (and studied humanities or arts subjects), and to have been employed."[150] "Terrorists (at least those in [their] sample) had a simpler, shallower conception of Islam than radicals."[151]

Roach and Forcese in their work "False Security: The Radicalization of Canadian Anti-Terrorism" also stress the importance of distinguishing between radicalization and radicalization to violence/violent extremism.[152] As John Horgan, director of the International Center for the

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[147] Barlett, Birdwell and King, *The Edge of Violence: A Radical Approach to Extremism,* 7.
[148] Ibid
[149] Ibid, 10.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Forcese and Roach, *False Security: The Radicalization of Canadian Anti-Terrorism*, 458.

Study of Terrorism at Pennsylvania State University, puts it, "the idea that radicalization causes

terrorism is perhaps the greatest myth alive today in terrorism research."[153] Referencing

McCauley and Moskalenko's study, which calculates that "only 1 in every 10 persons espousing

the most extreme al-Qaida-inspired narrative makes the move to violence,"[154] Roach and Forcese

conclude that "the process to violence is… more complex than simply harbouring radical

opinion."[155] Moreover, they suggest that the connection between radical and extremist ideas and

an actual willingness to engage in terrorist violence is non-existent.[156]

The importance of identifying the difference and the weak, or perhaps non-existent

relationship between radical ideas and violent action is of utmost priority when developing

counter-radicalization (CVE) programs. For example, Roach and Forcese explain that when such

a distinction is made, the next step is to address the "methods through which people pursue their

beliefs, not the belief themselves."[157] "Indeed, a useful CVE program would provide the tools to

do just that: advance democratically acceptable solutions to grievances. In this manner, a belief –

entirely acceptable in a free society however unpopular it may be – is steered toward conduct

that is also entirely acceptable – even essential - in a democratic society."[158]

**Debate over the role of religion.**

Another important distinction to make is that "terrorism is not associated with any single

culture, religion or group identity."[159] However, first al-Qaeda and then ISIS - inspired terrorism

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[153] Forcese and Roach, *False Security: The Radicalization of Canadian Anti-Terrorism*, 458.
[154] Ibid, 459.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Ibid.
[157]Ibid, 463.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Barlett, Birdwell and King, *The Edge of Violence: A Radical Approach to Extremism*, 10.

has been considered to be the main national security risk to Western countries and represent a manipulation of Islam.[160] When speaking about the role of religion in radicalization to violence, and specifically Islam - it is a highly-disputed matter. On the one hand, there is a stereotype, mainly created by media and from time to time supported by politicians for various purposes, that Islam is "an inherently violent and fanatical religion."[161] "[T]here is a convergence of European and American political discourse that has resulted not only in the targeting of Muslims in the West but also in the legitimation of deeply held anti-Islamic public claims that were, particularly in Europe, once mainly the purview of far-right-wing elements in the society."[162]

On the other hand, we have a long tradition in Western scholarship to disregard religion as a valid factor of radicalization. Religious beliefs and practices are often considered "only the secondary manifestation of some primary cause or causes."[163] It is paramount not to fall for any of these two extremes. Therefore, one should not neglect the role of religion or leave it in a secondary place, nor should one label Islam a violent religion and blame religion for all terrorist endeavors. Religion could be a significant factor in one's radicalization, but it is not specific only to Islam. "The move to religiously inspired violence may be best understood through the lens of sociology that studies religious conversions and fanaticism and not a more myopic inquiry to identify some inherent flaw in Islamic belief."[164]

Bramadat explains that "secularization" of Western societies over the past 100 years has made it possible for people to live a secular life, yet is also making it "more and more possible

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[160] Barlett, Birdwell and King, *The Edge of Violence: A Radical Approach to Extremism*, 10.
[161] Dawson and Bramadat. *Religious Radicalization and Securitization in Canada and Beyond*, 13.
[162] Ibid.
[163] Ibid, 84.
[164] Forcese and Roach, *False Security: The Radicalization of Canadian Anti-Terrorism,* 460.

for individuals and groups to identify with larger and often 'fundamentalist' religious movements that are no longer rooted in one's own region."[165] After approximately twenty years of research, which has demonstrated salience and dynamism of religion (though quite often transformed) in the West, not to mention elsewhere, unidirectional versions of the secularization hypothesis began to break down and religion has re-entered public discourse.[166] The religions at the centre of these debates are no longer primarily Christianity and Judaism but rather religions about which many people in Western societies are uninformed.[167] The Canadian institutional structure is not designed to respond to non-Christian (or minority Christian) practices and claims, which causes many of the contemporary controversies regarding religion (mainly those related to Islam, Sikhism, and fundamentalist Mormonism).[168] "This de facto ethnocentrism has greatly increased the interest in the political and public consciousness in 'managing' minority religious communities in a rather ad hoc manner, even though these three 'problem' minority communities represent a very small group of people, given that only roughly 4–6 per cent of Canadians in total belong to one of these communities."[169]

The radicalization – securitization dialectic has changed since the events of September 11, 2001. It has "changed the type of securitization experienced by many religious and ethnic minorities"[170] through increasing "the profile of certain conservative cohorts within relatively new and internally heterogeneous religions in the Canadian public sphere well out of proportion to their actual numbers in society." Many critics were concerned that after 9/11 religion,

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[165] Dawson and Bramadat. *Religious Radicalization and Securitization in Canada and Beyond*, 10.
[166] Ibid, 11.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid.

especially Islam, came to be seen as a cultural non-negotiable identity marker, and, even more troubling, as a risk factor for extremism.[171] One of the problems with such a fixation on a person's religious identity is that it may lead one to feel more compelled to identify more rigidly and defensively with this feature of his/her identity.[172] Important to note, within the context of securitization, is that this kind of attention is far more commonly experienced by Muslims and Sikhs than by Christians.[173]

Moreover, the essence of the role that religion could play is quite vague, since there are studies that question the religious knowledge of terrorists. For example, Quintan Wicktorowicz's research – which studied a broad range of British Muslim extremists - found that this group was not the most knowledgeable about Islamic theology, had only superficial religious backgrounds, and were vulnerable to radicalization.[174] Another study conducted by the Demos think-tank, which compared al-Qaeda inspired terrorists to simply Muslim radicals that have not perpetrated any acts of violence, concluded that terrorists (at least within the study's sample) had a much simpler, shallower conception of Islam, as opposed to radicals.[175] Nonetheless, regardless of how knowledgeable and educated one is in religious terms (also a relative and disputed characteristic), it is important to recognize that "one of the few general defining features of

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[171] Dawson and Bramadat. *Religious Radicalization and Securitization in Canada and Beyond*, 11.

[172] Ibid.

[173] Ibid, 12.

[174] Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, 23.

[175] Barlett, Birdwell and King, *The Edge of Violence: A Radical Approach to Extremism,* 10.

fundamentalists may be the sense that the whole world is God's world, so to speak, and all discrete events are merely instances in an essentially religious narrative."[176]

Overall, religion has a place and a role when it comes to radicalization to violence, yet the question remains: what is that place and that role and how exactly does it influence an individual on her or his path of radicalization to violence? As there is no single answer, since it may be a different one for every case, posing this question is of great importance – which is so often missed when religion and terrorism are bluntly married by politicians and media.

**Community Policing**

Community policing is recognized as one of the effective proactive measures that prevent radicalization to violence. Community policing, as defined by the OSCE, is "a philosophy and organizational strategy that promotes a partnership-based, collaborative effort between the police and the community to more effectively and efficiently identify, prevent and solve problems of crime, the fear of crime, issues of physical safety and security, social disorder and neighbourhood decay in order to improve the quality of life for everyone."[177] The collaborative OSCE study, drawn on experiences of numerous countries with community policing, including Canada, identified the following potential benefits of community policing:

• Anchoring policing into respect for human rights and the rule of law;

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[176] Dawson and Bramadat. *Religious Radicalization and Securitization in Canada and Beyond*, 15.

[177] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach," 14.

• Improving public perceptions of, and interaction with the police;

• Improving communication with the public on counterterrorism;

• Increasing public vigilance and resilience;

• Enhancing police understanding of communities as a basis to better engage and co-operate with them;

• Helping to identify and address community safety issues and grievances;

• Facilitating timely identification and referral of critical situations; and

• Improving relations between the police and individuals and groups that have been hard to reach or not yet engaged with.[178]

The OSCE study also highlighted the risks in applying community-policing approaches in preventing terrorism:

 • Over-reliance on community policing;

• Stigmatizing particular communities through selective engagement;

• Securitizing their relationship with communities;

• Using community policing to "spy" on communities;

• Risks to individuals engaging with the police; and

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[178] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach," 21.

• Unintentionally giving the appearance that the police support particular individuals or groups, which could either undermine the legitimacy of those in a position to exercise a positive influence within the community or alienate other community members or communities.[179]

Ultimately, community policing, if exercised with proper diligence and community sensitivity, can play a significant role in intercepting radicalization to violence at its early stage. However, "community policing cannot function as a stand-alone tool to prevent terrorism and counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Violence (VERLT)."[180]  Roach and Forcese suggest that in Canada, "the major component of the government's prevention efforts so far appears to be community policing."[181] This mainly refers to the community policing approach exercised by the RCMP through its Community Outreach program and National Security Awareness aimed at building mutual trust between the RCMP and communities affected by national securities investigations by opening and maintaining regular lines of communication through meetings and community-based events.[182] The "near absence of ethnic minorities in CSIS and RCMP national security units make it very difficult to perform undercover work and infiltrate diaspora terrorist networks."[183] This is why security agencies such as CSIS, RCMP and the provincial police forces may "benefit from developing closer relations with diaspora communities, which can provide valuable insights, language skills, and cultural understanding to

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[179] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach," 22.
[180] Ibid, 21.
[181] Forcese and Roach, *False Security: The Radicalization of Canadian Anti-Terrorism,* 476.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Parent and Ellis III, *Countering Radicalization of Diaspora Communities in Canada,* 72.

aid in the analysis of data and intelligence from their countries of origin."[184] "Good relationships between law enforcement and sources in or close to radical movements in diaspora communities are vital to acquiring actionable information."[185] However, there is a fine line between community policing and surveillance, which, if crossed, can undermine the trust and relationship between security forces and communities. "Community policing, however, is not, and should not be, about purposeful intelligence-gathering for counterterrorism."[186] Nevertheless, positive relationships between communities and security forces could lead to proactive notification of suspicious activity.

Another nuance of community policing in diaspora communities is their immigrant and newcomer dimension. "Community policing in diaspora communities must actively and consistently address community concerns, fears of crime, and suspicions of authorities."[187] The way to do this is through establishing ongoing long-term relationships. Community policing highlights the importance and the role that community can play in at least one aspect of preventing radicalization to violence. There are other ways which make community involvement essential in countering radicalization to violence and are discussed further below.

**Community Involvement.**

The official counter-terrorism framework offered by the Government of Canada is outlined in 4 publications: Canada's first-ever counter-terrorism strategy "Building Resilience

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[184] Parent and Ellis III, *Countering Radicalization of Diaspora Communities in Canada,* 72.
[185] Ibid, 73.
[186] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach," 22.
[187] Parent and Ellis III, *Countering Radicalization of Diaspora Communities in Canada,* 72.

Against Terrorism", published in 2012; the 2013 Public Report on the Terrorism Threat to

Canada; the 2014 Public Report on the Terrorism Threat to Canada; and, most recently, the 2016

Public Report on the Terrorism Threat to Canada. All four acknowledge the importance of

working with communities in order to prevent homegrown radicalization to violence. Neither of

them, however, go into detail of how this cooperation will or should look like, other than

mentioning several initiatives that include community involvement. The 2012 counter-terrorism

strategy mentions community-government cooperation through introducing 2 Prevent initiatives:

the Cross-Cultural Roundtable on Security to engage Canadians and the Government of Canada

in a long-term dialogue on matters related to national security[188]; and the RCMP's National

Security Community Outreach program "which responds directly to the threat of radicalization

leading to violent extremism through local initiatives intended to address potential political

violence and to identify and address the concerns of minority communities."[189] The 2013 Public

Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada confirms the need for outreach programs and

engagement with communities to counter homegrown violent extremism.[190] The following 2014

Public Report goes further to state that "the means to help prevent violent extremism ultimately

lie within communities,"[191]and suggests members and leaders of communities to be "crucial

partners in recognizing and responding to the subtle indicators of radicalization."[192] It also calls

for building awareness within communities around the threat and its prevention. Finally, the

2016 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada states that the Government is "launching a

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[188] Public Safety Canada, "Connecting with Canadian Communities," accessed July 30, 2017.
https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scrt/crss-cltrl-rndtbl/index-en.aspx.
[189] Government of Canada, *Building Resilience Against Terrorism: Canada's Counter-Terrorism Strategy.*
[190]Public Safety Canada, *2013 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada.*
[191] Public Safety Canada, *2014 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada.*
[192] Ibid.

new national office for community outreach and engagement to pursue research, mobilize resources, and help coordinate work at all levels to detect and prevent tragedies before they occur."[193] The lack of detail and specifics around how exactly the community will be involved and what the community-government partnership will look like is, most likely, the consequence of Canada's inexperience and lag behind other Western countries in its counter-violent extremism (CVE) program. Existing literature and experience of other Western governments can assist in filling this gap to a certain extent.

British experience suggests communities should be involved in the counter-narrative against violent action.[194] As an example, during the 1990s a new Salafi mosque in Brixton became a "centre of excellence in tackling the pernicious influence of al-Qaida propagandists."[195] "Unlike the media stereotype of mosque managements being out of touch with its youth, Brixton mosque has been fully engaged with the local youth community for years and helps reduce 'takfiri' influence."[196] Moreover, Basia Spalek and Robert Lambert suggest that it is extremely important that the main emphasis in community engagement is on developing forms of engagement that are most effective for the purposes of counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation rather than questioning the types of Muslim identities that ought to be encouraged to influence public policy.[197] They explain that UK government policy regarding the involvement of Muslim communities in helping to combat extremism is being influenced by international geo-political powers at play, which results in only certain sections of the Muslim

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[193] Public Safety Canada, *2014 Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada.*
[194] Jackson, "Counter-Terrorism and Communities: An Interview with Robert Lambert," 297.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Spalek and Lambert. "Muslim Communities, Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Radicalisation: A Critically Reflective Approach to Engagement," 261.

communities being included (for example, only those Muslims considered to be "moderate").[198] Robert Lambert argues that, in fact, those sections of Muslim communities that may not be considered by the government as a "legitimate partner" (in the case of UK it is Salafi and Islamist Muslim communities), might be the most knowledgeable on the issue. Overall, Lambert explains that involving the community permits government agencies to hear the voices of those who may share the same political grievances as terrorist groups, yet not agree with the methods.[199] Knowledge of these political grievances helps uncover motivations for the violent action of individuals radicalized to violence.

Forcese and Roach also stress that an essential ingredient of a Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) program, which has been so far missing in Canada, is "a counter-narrative that disputes ideological claim of Al-Qaida, ISIS, and like-minded entities that the West is at war with Islam.[200] They suggest that such counter narratives, and counter-narratives that deliver anti-violent messages "cannot be ham-handed government propaganda,"[201] and community groups may be better positioned to create and deliver such messages, while government actors are better suited to deal with the political counter-narrative.[202]

Ideally, community involvement should be about empowering communities with preventing radicalization to violence by making them more resilient to this threat, rather than making it their responsibility. Moreover, community involvement should not only imply involvement of the Muslim community when countering al-Qaida and ISIS-inspired terrorism.

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[198] Spalek and Lambert. "Muslim Communities, Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Radicalisation: A Critically Reflective Approach to Engagement," 261.
[199] Jackson, "Counter-Terrorism and Communities: An Interview with Robert Lambert,"294.
[200] Forcese and Roach, *False Security: The Radicalization of Canadian Anti-Terrorism,* 455.
[201] Ibid, 465.
[202] Ibid.

Community involvement should be defined as the broader cohort of individuals which could assist in preventing radicalization to violence: mental heath services specialists, education and employment counsellors, youth and community workers, teachers and community leaders, etc. Such an understanding of community involvement promotes a multi-disciplinary approach to countering radicalization to violence – an approach that has started to define some CVE programs in Britain, Australia and the United States. For Canada, such a CVE program remains an urgent task to fulfill.

**Conclusion**

Understanding that terrorism and radicalization to violence are not inherent to any one religion, ethnicity, or race, and identifying reasons for radicalization to violence rather than attempting to construct terrorist profiles will take us a step closer to solving the issue. It is important to use all three levels of analysis - micro, meso, and macro - in order to obtain a fuller understanding of the root causes of radicalization to violence. This will also ensure that foreign policy is considered when discussing the issue. It is also necessary to keep in mind that perceptions of injustice are subjective and will differ from one individual to another. Thus, predisposing risk factors are important to acknowledge and be aware of, while it is just as important to avoid assumptions that they will necessarily lead an individual to terrorism.

As the Internet has penetrated numerous aspects of our everyday lives and became a successful tool for terrorist propaganda, we ought to develop measures that could diminish their influence. Credible counter-propaganda and raising awareness are possible solutions.

If we want to advance in countering radicalization to violence, we must commit to both clarity and caution when distinguishing between radical thoughts and radical actions and when

accounting for the role of religion. Based on existing research, it appears that the focus of CVE programs should be on countering violent action, rather than radical thoughts, as the latter has proven to be counterproductive. Blaming religion for terrorism or using it as a basis for stereotyping is also a dangerous route which can weaken community cohesion and ignite more issues.

Finally, involving communities in countering radicalization to violence is essential. This involvement should not discriminate by including only those deemed legitimate community partners by the government, as well as it should be broad and open to include anyone considered a stakeholder. Such an approach should assist with empowering communities in countering radicalization to violence.

**Chapter 5. Winnipeg Case Study**

This chapter presents the new knowledge derived from the interviews. It provides the interviewees' opinions and experiences regarding countering radicalization to violence and community involvement. Some reference to publicly available sources and scholarly literature is used in this chapter to support interviewees' opinions and provide for a fuller picture. It explains why the issue of radicalization to violence is relevant to the community and shows the necessity of community involvement in countering the problem.

**Reasons and factors of radicalization to violence.**

This section presents the respondents' views of the root causes of radicalization to violence in Canada and Western countries in general. Most of my participants believe that causes of radicalization to violence in Canada and in the West in general differ from those in the Middle Eastern countries torn apart by conflict. The interviewees named the following factors as contributing to radicalization to violence: (note how they echo one another and relate to each other):

*Isolation/alienation/not belonging/feeling of inferiority* (isolation on an individual level). Disconnection from community (be it the local Muslim community or any other community) causes one to become isolated from the broader society, one's sense of belonging is lost and may lead one to seek belonging elsewhere. Isolated individuals do not attend Mosques as frequently as integrated individuals and, therefore, are less likely to pursue Islamic education. They may begin to question their identity and start looking for extreme outlets. As referenced by

one of the interviewees who has done research on 'reasons for youth joining criminal gangs,' this component is similar to one which explains why youth join gangs and criminal structures.[203]

*Political context and hypocrisy of the West*. Seeing uninformed policies being pushed forward by governments that affect the Muslim world is an issue for Muslims living in the West. The political hypocrisy, the devastation of the Middle East through multiple wars, which has happened because of ill-informed policies, make up one of the root causes of global radicalization to violence.[204] Respondents see hypocrisy in the shift of Western governments' policy. They refer to the U.S. and its allies first assisting with funding Al Qaeda and ISIS, yet later announcing war against these terrorist groups. Young people see this inconsistency and hypocrisy and become disillusioned.[205]

As much as this is not a justification to commit violence in Canada or any other peaceful country, it is a strong indication Western governments need to be aware of the consequences their foreign policy in the Middle East may bear at home. None of the interviewees directly mentioned Canada or any specifics of its foreign policy, however they view Canada as a contributor to Western policies vis-à-vis the Middle East, with the U.S. leading the alliance. The War on Terror has been widely criticized and labeled as counterproductive.[206] The war that

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[203] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, August 13, 2016.

[204] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 2, June 30, 2016.

[205] Leonard Tailleur (Aaron Driver's lawyer), August 31, 2016.

[206] Julian Borger, "'War on Terror' Was a Mistake, Says Miliband," *The Guardian,* January 15, 2009, accessed July 30, 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2009/jan/15/war-on-terror-miliband; Ivan Eland, "War on Terror Dangerously Counterproductive," *Antiwar.com.* April 21, 2008, accessed July 30, 2017. http://original.antiwar.com/eland/2008/04/21/war-on-terror-dangerously-counterproductive/; Paul Rogers, "A War Gone Badly Wrong - The War on Terror Ten Years On," *Oxford Research Group.* September 1, 2011, http://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/publications/middle_east/war_gone_badly_wrong_war_terror_ten_years.

began with assumptive success – the termination of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the dispersal of Al-Qaeda by end of 2001[207] – resulted in unexpected longevity of the Afghanistan (2001-2014) and Iraq (2003-2011) wars, immense human costs, with millions of displaced Iraqi, Afghani, and Pakistani refugees, financial implications and political developments.[208] These consequences result in Muslims' grievances regarding Western policy in the Middle East.

Nevertheless, as noted by Saad Khan[209], the United States had a policy of imperialism in numerous other countries, such as Latin American states and Vietnam. These policies also led to many casualties, were criticized and considered ill-informed, yet the issue of suicide bombers and terrorists from these places does not exist. This suggests that the way in which foreign policy plays a role in radicalization to violence is a complex matter.

*Media and the news.* There are several ways in which news and social media contribute to radicalization to violence, – both directly and indirectly. Social media and the Internet are often significant facilitators of ISIS-inspired radicalization, as described in Chapter 3. However, what was particularly noticeable throughout the interviews, was the concern that participants had regarding the way in which the media and news project radicalization to violence and terrorism. The media tends to both oversimplify and exaggerate these issues. This is a particularly salient problem when it comes to labelling terrorists as Muslims. In most cases, there is not enough evidence for linking the terrorist act with Islam or with one's Muslim identity.[210] Or else, the media circumvents real reporting by drawing a suspect's primary identity from his/her religion as

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[207] Rogers, "A War Gone Badly Wrong - The War on Terror Ten Years On."
[208] Ibid.
[209] Saad Khan, Master's student at University of Manitoba researching second generation radicalization, August 21, 2016.
[210] Sergeant Wytinck

a way of coding individuals. By labelling a terrorist as a Muslim, a misguiding message connecting religious identity and violent action is sent. Such labelling spreads hatred towards Islam and Muslims and feeds into Islamophobia. "It's dangerous what the media does every day to the community, to the Police and to the outsiders. It's unfair when the media labels terrorists as necessarily Muslim. It's just a terrorist and that's just what it is."[211]

Another problem inherent in the media is lack of comprehensive analysis on the issue at hand. As Saad Khan[212] explained, when the Brussels bombings happened on March 22, 2016, they were portrayed as shocking and as if they were "out of the blue." However, there was no mention of the fact that Brussels has a long-term issue with the ghettoization of the Muslim minority (the same issue exists with Maghreb youth in France), which is one of the reasons individuals become radicalized. Since underlying causes of such events are not brought to people's attention, it results in simplistic logic and stereotyping advanced by media and the news.

An additional way in which the media perpetuates both Islamophobia and radicalization to violence is by "picking and choosing" what to report. The media can create an impression that something is more of a concern than it really is or, on the contrary, completely disregard existing problems. An example of the former is the case with robberies. Robberies, which happen in Winnipeg and across Canada on a regular basis, usually don't make the headlines, yet if someone of a Muslim identity gets robbed it is reported as a hate crime, thus exaggerating Islamophobia.[213] An example of the latter is when instances of shootings in Orlando or bombings in Paris are reported as something unacceptable and outrageous, yet instances of people being

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[211] Sergeant Wytinck
[212] Saad Khan.
[213] Sergeant Wytinck (Winnipeg Police), August 23, 2106.

killed in Pakistan, and bombings at Turkey's airport are reported as something "due to the violent nature of these countries." This is considered victim blaming and has an impact on people's emotions, who identify with or relate to those countries. Such reporting depreciates the lives of these victims, and discriminates against non-Westerners and non-Europeans.[214]

   *Identity*. Identities in crisis are prone to radicalization to violence. Challenges to identity occur when newcomers to Canada are not properly integrated, or second-generation immigrants try to determine their identity. "Religion is one of the core identities people hold on to and, because people don't always understand that identity is fluid and changes over time, they get scared of the change and therefore try to hold on to what they believe their identity should look like. Sometimes this is taken to extremes and we find people becoming radicalized."[215] One of the respondents (originally from Egypt), while attending university in Canada, noticed that second generation immigrant students, especially those with a Palestinian background, were the most extreme members of the Muslim Student Association and held radical ideas. "It seemed as if they wanted to prove that they were Arab."[216] The respondent believes this is due to lack of identity and confidence in who they are.[217]

   In addition, when second generation immigrants identify with a country in a state of conflict that is being bombed, they often feel the need to "fix things", yet they don't know how, nor have the resources to do so. In such cases, when one is hopeless, terrorism may become a justified response to the suffering within these countries. Someone adhering to this justification will not necessarily attempt or even consider the act of terrorism themselves, but will see it as a

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[214] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 2, June 30, 2016.
[215] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, August 16, 2016.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Ibid.

just response.[218] Saad Khan explains, for example, that identity is especially an issue for this group, since they grew up in a system of Western values and traditions, while their families tried preserving values and traditions of their homeland. These values and traditions can be conflicting at times, bringing second-generation immigrants into confusion and sometimes leading to an identity crisis.[219]

*"Us vs them" rhetoric, simplifying to a binary worldview.* The "East vs West", or "us vs. them" concept is extremely harmful, yet it is attractive to a lot of people due to its simplicity. The separation of "us" and "them," where "they" are the "bad guy," creates a binary picture of the world and makes it easy to blame "them." This separation leads to dehumanizing "them," which makes justifying violence easier.[220]

*Issues of non-diagnosed post-traumatic stress/coming from a more radical background.* This issue is specific to newcomers who come from conflict and war zones. As suggested by a prominent Muslim community leader, newcomers are not usually tested for post-traumatic stress and other mental issues.[221] He reports that there are people in the community, who may have been victims of war crimes and violence which have affected them psychologically, yet they are left without any help or treatment.[222] He suggests that if post-traumatic stress is left untreated it may contribute to radicalization to violence. "It's as if they attach themselves to ideologies to try and make themselves feel better."[223]

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[218] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, August 16, 2016.
[219] Saad Khan.
[220] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, August 4, 2016.
[221] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 2, June 30, 2016.
[222] Ibid.
[223] Ibid.

Research indicates that up to 20 to 50 percent of Syrian refugee children suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), while 10 to 15 percent of adults are also affected.[224] The 'Caring for Kids New to Canada' website, created in 2013 with the support of the Canadian Paediatric Society, also suggests that PTSD is common among refugee children and youth, and among their parents as well.[225] Online sources do not explain whether newcomers are tested for PTSD or not. However, guidelines created by Canadian health officials for newcomers advise not to "conduct routine screening for PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) but be alert to signs and symptoms, particularly in refugees."[226] It seems that health officials are aware of PTSD among newcomers, yet their mental-health response to the situation is only at its developing stage. The 'Caring for Kids New to Canada' website +does not suggest that PTSD can lead to radicalization to violence, but symptoms such as extreme risk-taking that may be life-threatening re-enactments of trauma, social withdrawal and rebellion at home or school are issues that need to be addressed.[227]

Also, several respondents mention that newcomers from countries with more radical views and where a certain mindset is promoted, may be more radically inclined to begin with.

*(Systemic) Racism/Islamophobia*. Racism and Islamophobia can lead to alienation and loneliness. Racism and Islamophobia come in many ways - from not hiring an individual for a

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[224] Kristy Kirkup, "Syrian Refugees Plagued by High Rates of PTSD," *CTV News,* November 25, 2015, accessed July 30, 2017, http://www.ctvnews.ca/health/syrian-refugees-plagued-by-high-rates-of-ptsd-1.2673341.

[225] Morton Beiser, and Daphne Korczak, "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder," *Caring for Kids New to Canada, a*ccessed July 30, 2017, http://www.kidsnewtocanada.ca/mental-health/ptsd.

[226] Andre Picard, "Canadian Health Officials Create Care Guidelines for Newcomers," *The Globe and Mail,* July 25, 2011, accessed July 30, 2017, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/health-and-fitness/canadian-health-officials-create-care-guidelines-for-newcomers/article588191/.

[227] Beiser and Korczak, "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder."

job due to her/his racial/religious appearance, to someone yelling out on the streets such as "go back to your country." It is interesting to note how differently respondents experienced racism/Islamophobia in Canada. Two respondents compared the extent of Islamophobia in Canada to Islamophobia in the U.S. (both had experiences of residing in the U.S. for over 5 years) and gave contrary opinions: one believes that Islamophobia is much more widespread in Canada than in the U.S., and the other stated the opposite. Out of the 16 respondents from the Winnipeg Case Study all have either experienced racism and Islamophobia themselves or heard about someone having that experience.

The Environics Institute in collaboration with several other organizations published a final report of the 2016 survey of Muslims in Canada, which suggests that "one-third (35%) of Muslims surveyed report to have experienced discrimination or being treated unfairly by others in Canada in the past five years because of their religion (22%), ethnic or cultural background (22%), language (13%) or sex (6%)."[228] It is a common issue and it feeds into the "us" vs. "them" rhetoric and may lead one to question their identity.

On the other end of the Islamophobia/racism spectrum is the lack of constructive criticism in the liberal arts tradition of the universities- any sort of criticism towards Muslims or Islam is likely to be seen as Islamophobia or racism.[229] I am refering to the debate on political correctness, which questions the extent to which political correctness should be exercised in order not to underestimate or disregard the issue of al-Qaida - and ISIS - inspired radicalization

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[228] The Environics Institute. *Survey of Muslims in Canada 2016.* Final Report, The Environics Institute for Survey Research, (2016), 38, Accessed July 30, 2017. http://www.environicsinstitute.org/uploads/institute-projects/survey%20of%20muslims%20in%20canada%202016%20-%20final%20report.pdf.
[229] Saad Khan.

to violence.  This debate on political correctness once again came to light after Motion 103 to

"condemn Islamophobia and all forms of systemic racism and religious discrimination" was put

forward by Liberal MP Iqra Khalid on December 1st, 2016.  The argument against the motion is

that it singles out Muslims for special treatment.[230] Tarek Fatah – founder of the Muslim

Canadian Congress, Canadian writer, activist and broadcaster – is concerned that the motion

"mentions only Islamophobia by name and not any other form of religious persecution,"[231] which

"echoes the agenda of Islamists and Islamic extremists in North America who are shamelessly

taking advantage of the Quebec City tragedy to advance the international Muslim Brotherhood

agenda to silence any critique of Islamism."[232] The argument in support of Motion 103 is that it

addresses a pressing issue of hate crimes which, according to Statistics Canada data, have more

than doubled in the 3 year period between 2013 and 2016.[233] As much as this is a concern,

Motion 103 is fraught with eclipsing issues of hate-speech congregations. Tarek Fatah makes

reference to a cijnews.com report of an Islamic cleric in Montreal making hateful statements in

his prayer: "O Allah, give victory to our brothers who engage in Jihad; O Allah, give them

victory over their enemy; O Allah, destroy the accursed Jews; O Allah, make their children

orphans and their women widows."[234] Mr. Fatah proceeds with stating that if Motion 103 intends

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[230] Cathleen Harris, "Conservatives Wrestle Over Liberal MP's Anti-Islamophobia Motion," *CBC News,* February 14, 2017, accessed July 30, 2017,
http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/islamophobia-m103-khalid-motion-1.3982013.
[231] Tarek Fatah, "Islamophobia Motion Will Target Moderate Muslims," *Toronto Sun,* February 14, 2017, accessed July 30, 2017, http://www.torontosun.com/2017/02/14/islamophobia-motion-will-target-moderate-muslims.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Anna Mehler Paperny, "Hate Crimes Against Muslim-Canadians More Than Doubled In 3 Years," *Global News,* April 13, 2016, accessed July 30, 2017,
http://globalnews.ca/news/2634032/hate-crimes-against-muslim-canadians-more-than-doubled-in-3-years/.
[234] Fatah, "Islamophobia Motion Will Target Moderate Muslims."

to denounce all forms of systemic racism, then such hate-speech prayers should also be denounced, "variations of which," he suggests, "are read at most mosques every Friday."[235]

This debate on political correctness is multi-faceted and is a very "grey area," which spurs heated discussions and, unfortunately, divides the Canadian society. Yet, lack of constructive criticism hinders and retards progress in solving such issues as radicalization to violence and Islamophobia.

*Perceived Injustice.* Seeing injustice can lead an individual to feel the need to "do something" to "make things right."[236] Injustice does not necessarily imply feelings of injustice towards oneself. It is more common for someone to feel injustice towards their kin in countries they identify with, which are being effected by Western foreign policy. Seeing injustice can lead people to do very noble things but it can also lead to radicalization to violence.[237] Having access through the Internet to numerous atrocious events around the world, to all the injustice, and not knowing how to change the situation, along with feeling helpless and assuming that voting, writing letters to politicians and having rallies will not bring change, can become one of the triggers of radicalization to violence.[238] Such contradictions as Barack Obama winning the Nobel Peace Prize, yet the United States dropping thousands of bombs on Muslim countries that same year devalue Muslims and make them feel like "collateral damage."[239]

*Historical roots*. This is one of the least mentioned reasons in the scholarly literature that discusses the root causes and motives of radicalization to violence. As one of the community

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[235] Fatah, "Islamophobia Motion Will Target Moderate Muslims."
[236] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 2, June 30, 2016.
[237] Ibid.
[238] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 2, June 30, 2016.
[239] Ibid.

leaders explained,[240] colonial history contributed to the issue of "Muslims vs. the West." He goes

on to explain that "Islamic law developed when Muslims were an ascendant superpower which

was the case until the Napoleonic era (1799-1815). This geopolitical arrangement was altered by

Western colonialism. To an extent, Muslims are still living post-colonial trauma. There were

times when China banned its Muslims from participating in government, yet that did not incite

much protest from the Muslim world. Even though China's communist system is more

dismissive of Islamic law than democratic values, Muslims have stronger grievances against the

West rather than China."[241] Bernard Lewis - a British American historian specializing in oriental

studies – provides an explanation to such grievances against the West and to the shift of power.

He writes:

> Like every other civilization known to human history, the Muslim world in its heyday
> saw itself as the center of truth and enlightenment, surrounded by infidel barbarians
> whom it would in due course enlighten and civilize. But between the different groups of
> barbarians there was a crucial difference. The barbarians to the east and the south were
> polytheists and idolaters, offering no serious threat and no competition at all to Islam. In
> the north and west, in contrast, Muslims from an early date recognized a genuine rival—a
> competing world religion, a distinctive civilization inspired by that religion, and an
> empire that, though much smaller than theirs, was no less ambitious in its claims and
> aspirations. This was the entity known to itself and others as Christendom, a term that
> was long almost identical with Europe.
>
> The struggle between these rival systems has now lasted for some fourteen centuries. It
> began with the advent of Islam, in the seventh century, and has continued virtually to the
> present day. It has consisted of a long series of attacks and counterattacks, jihads and
> crusades, conquests and reconquests. For the first thousand years Islam was advancing,
> Christendom in retreat and under threat. The new faith conquered the old Christian lands
> of the Levant and North Africa, and invaded Europe, ruling for a while in Sicily, Spain,
> Portugal, and even parts of France. The attempt by the Crusaders to recover the lost lands
> of Christendom in the east was held and thrown back, and even the Muslims' loss of
> southwestern Europe to the Reconquista was amply compensated by the Islamic advance
> into southeastern Europe, which twice reached as far as Vienna. For the past three
> hundred years, since the failure of the second Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683 and the

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[240] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 1, June 30, 2016.
[241] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 1, June 30, 2016.

rise of the European colonial empires in Asia and Africa, Islam has been on the defensive, and the Christian and post-Christian civilization of Europe and her daughters has brought the whole world, including Islam, within its orbit.

For a long time now there has been a rising tide of rebellion against this Western paramountcy, and a desire to reassert Muslim values and restore Muslim greatness. The Muslim has suffered successive stages of defeat. The first was his loss of domination in the world, to the advancing power of Russia and the West. The second was the undermining of his authority in his own country, through an invasion of foreign ideas and laws and ways of life and sometimes even foreign rulers or settlers, and the enfranchisement of native non-Muslim elements. The third—the last straw—was the challenge to his mastery in his own house, from emancipated women and rebellious children. It was too much to endure, and the outbreak of rage against these alien, infidel, and incomprehensible forces that had subverted his dominance, disrupted his society, and finally violated the sanctuary of his home was inevitable. It was also natural that this rage should be directed primarily against the millennial enemy and should draw its strength from ancient beliefs and loyalties.[242]

This macro-level aspect ties in with current foreign policy dynamics between the West and Muslim majority countries in the Middle East and North Africa. This is a large field to mine and needs further investigation, yet it is a very peculiar point. The role this historical aspect plays in radicalization to violence is yet to be assessed and requires a separate study. Nevertheless, it is worth considering when developing counter-radicalization policies.

*Lack of Islamic education and critical thinking*. When people grow up in a country which is culturally and religiously homogenous, and do not travel around the world, they are more likely to be close-minded and less tolerant to different interpretations of Islam. These people are not likely to come from a place of understanding in regards to other cultures and religions, nor to have critical thinking –"the intellectually disciplined process of actively and

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[242] Bernard Lewis, "The Root of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic,* September, 1990, accessed July 30, 2017. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1990/09/the-roots-of-muslim-rage/304643/.

skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information

gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or

communication, as a guide to belief and action."[243] Lack of Islamic education and critical

thinking make it easier to convince one that terrorism is a solution while using Islam as a

justification.[244] Several respondents confirmed that lack of knowledge in Islam may permit one

to use religion as justification for violent action, however, as one of the respondents stated: "one

would really need to pick and choose from the Quran to be able to use it as justification for

violent action."[245]

    *Ghettoization*. Ghettos are usually defined by low income families, with poor housing

and living conditions. A ghetto isolates and detaches a group of people from the broader

community, therefore preventing integration into mainstream society. Ghettoization limits

diversity and to an extent has the same effect as isolation, yet this occurs on a group level, rather

than on an individual level.  If ghetto residents have similar cultural and religious backgrounds,

they are more likely to belong to a monolithic and a close-minded environment and, therefore,

are more conducive to radicalization to violence.[246] One of the obstacles for newcomers is letting

go of their past, which becomes even more difficult if they are surrounded by a ghettoized

environment.  Systemic marginalization of specific communities, accompanied by inequality,

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[243] The Critical Thinking Community, *Defining Critical Thinking,* Accessed July 30, 2017,
https://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766.
[244] Mohammad Anwar, Muslim community member, July 5, 2016
[245] Yumna Gill, Muslim community member, July 10, 2016
[246] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, Muslim community member, August 4,
2016.

which is prominent in countries like France and Belgium, creates resentment within these communities, and an atmosphere in which dangerous ideas might gain ground and spread.[247]

*The vacuum in offering utopian visions of a better society and attractiveness of ISIS.* Dr. Dickson[248] explains that in the West, we used to offer utopian visions, but not anymore. "Even though there are bad utopias which are so simplistic that they inevitably lead to disaster, young people often crave some kind of a utopian vision, a vision of a better world, one to strive for. Arguably, we have a shortage of those visions, not just in the West, but around the world. The "American Dream" is no longer something people believe in and the idea of communism died out after the failure of major communist states. With the expansion of globalization and the wealth gap increase people are becoming disillusioned with liberal democratic capitalism as well. Young people, in particular, are looking for a better way. This can lead them into ecological movements and political movements of various kinds, of which ISIS and other violent Jihadist movements are an extreme example. Many young people who are idealistic and are looking for utopian visions can easily fall in ISIS's trap."[249] The growing crisis of individuals from the West traveling to the Middle East to join ISIS speaks to the organization's recruitment success. ISIS has been particularly successful with attracting youth by means of social media and online propaganda. Its primary recruits are 25 and younger and they are particularly interested in teens and in teenage girls aged 15 and 16 for the role of brides to raise the next generation of

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[247] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, Muslim community member, August 4, 2016.

[248] Dr. William Rory Dickson, July 16, 2016. Dr. William Rory Dickson is an assistant professor of Islamic Religion and Culture in the Religion and Culture Department at The University of Winnipeg. His research focuses on contemporary Islam in general, and on Islamic mysticism (Sufism).

[249] Ibid.

fighters.[250] ISIS appeals to both men and women for various reasons. The appeal that it has for young Muslim women in the West is the offering of 'empowerment,"[251] of adventure,[252] and of a utopian vision of sisterhood in an Islamic state.[253]

Dr. Dickson explains that ISIS is equally concerned with presenting images of hyper-masculinity, the hunter-warrior defending the poor and oppressed, as it is concerned with creating images of a perfect society, and healthcare propaganda. Not only does ISIS offer a utopia of a reinstatement of the Muslim Caliphate, it also offers an enhanced self-image through romanticizing its appeal. The romance of abandoning a comfortable life, especially for young men, is appealing to the members of the movement. Masculinity is an important component for attracting young male fighters, to which ISIS propaganda resorts - like all militaries do. This is how one gets other people to kill and be killed – by offering a romantic idea, which is heroic and of the ultimate sacrifice of abandoning the comforts and going "into the real world." This goes back to our primal masculine desires of a hunter and a warrior. Appealing to these archetypes has potential power, and this is why people join regular and irregular armies. The difference with groups like ISIS is that a part of their romanticism is also utopianism. It is one of the reasons why they have this appeal.[254]

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[250] Warren Richey, "Behind the Headlines//ISIS Recruitment," *Moment,* November 4, 2015, Accessed July 30, 2017, http://www.momentmag.com/behind-the-headlines-isis-recruitment/.
[251] Ibid.
[252] Samira, Shackle, "The London Girls Lost to ISIS: What Became of the "Jihadi Brides"," *New Statesman,* October 06, 2016, accessed July 30, 2017.
http://www.newstatesman.com/culture/observations/2016/10/london-girls-lost-isis-what-became-jihadi-brides.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Dr. William Rory Dickson, July 16, 2016.

*Imams preaching a certain way.* Imams have a significant role in the Muslim community,

they are looked up to, have the trust of the community, have power within the community, and

they can preach about anything. Imams can preach the acceptance of other cultures and religions,

promote peaceful coexistence and encourage inclusion and cooperation with the broader

Canadian society. Alternatively, they can preach radical ideas and encourage violence. Imams

can preach a certain way which could encourage radicalization to violence.[255] There is a debate

whether preaching radical Islam and radical ideas lead to terrorism. "An Imam teaching a more

radicalized version of Islam may not necessarily lead to terrorism. But if an Imam is teaching

violence as well, then it could lead to terrorism."[256] This debate pertains to the relationship

between radical ideas and violent action and has been elaborated on previously. (See "radical

ideas vs. violent action", Chapter 4).

**Addressing reasons and factors of radicalization to violence.**

Along with elaborating on the reasons and factors of radicalization to violence, my case

study respondents provided suggestions on how to address them.

*De-linking Islam from terrorism and radicalization to violence/changing vocabulary*.

Identifying a terrorist as a Muslim, and moreover emphasizing that as their primary identity is

often misleading and results in stereotyping and Islamophobia. Yumna Gill[257] believes that if

political and community leaders who appear on TV could speak up against linking Islam to

terrorism, and instead encourage discussion about each terrorist attack as an individual case, it

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[255] Anonymous, Muslim community member, July 3, 2016; Saad Khan, August 21, 2016.

[256] Constable Wong (Winnipeg Police), August 23, 2106.

[257] Yumna Gill, Muslim community member, July 10, 2016

would significantly change people's perspectives. Respondents also highlighted the need for politicians to be careful about linking Islam to terrorism.

On the other hand, one of the interviewees[258] made a valid point about the significant increase of terrorist attacks perpetrated by Muslims in the West within roughly the past 2 decades. Nevertheless, one should be careful when drawing conclusions even if a terrorist self-identifies as a Muslim. In each terrorist case, it is difficult to establish whether religious identity is the sole cause, or even one of the causes of the attack. The role of religion in radicalization to violence is a debated matter and therefore should be treated carefully. (See Chapter 4, "Debate about the Role of Religion")

*Integration*. Proper integration is vital for newcomers and ensures they learn to speak English, have a job/occupation, feel they belong in the mainstream community, are provided with appropriate housing and have ways of contributing to society. It is also important to ensure that children get education and "get engaged in various positive activities such as music, arts, sports, etc."[259] Integration is extremely important in avoiding isolation. It is also essential to ensure integration rather than assimilation, which means letting people respect and practice their culture while maintaining Canadian values. Integration adheres to multiculturalism, "which ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry and have a sense of belonging. Acceptance gives Canadians a feeling of security and self-confidence, making

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[258] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, August 21, 2016.
[259] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, August 13, 2016

them more open to, and accepting of, diverse cultures."[260] Giving up Canadian values for

integration is also very dangerous, since it may lead to conflict within society.[261]

*Keeping neighbourhoods diverse/avoiding ghettoization*. This refers to making sure

neighbourhoods are diverse in terms of nationality, religion, class, and race. When people are

immersed into different cultures and a more multicultural environment they learn to socialize

with the "other kind," thus building stronger community connections. In Winnipeg, and Canada

in general, the issue of ghettoization is not as severe as it is in countries like France and Belgium.

In France and Belgium, the "no-go zones", known as ghettos in North America, have a distinct

profile.[262] The "no-go zones" are usually ethnic enclaves in otherwise prosperous cities such as

Paris or Brussels, mostly populated by Muslims.[263] "Muslim communities are not inherently

predisposed to violence. The presence of a sizable Muslim population in a non-Muslim-majority

country does not inevitably presage jihadist bloodshed or demands for the imposition of

sharia."[264] What makes these "no-go zones" detrimental to society are several important

characteristics that are not the result of one's cultural or religious background. "These no-go

zones are areas of high unemployment, especially high youth unemployment."[265] These suburbs

can also be characterized as lawless, or living by their own set of rules/laws, which replace those

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[260] Government of Canada. "Canadian Multiculturalism: An Inclusive Citizenship."
http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/citizenship.asp
[261] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, August 16, 2016.
[262] Chloe Cushman, "Europe's No Go Zones: Inside the Lawless Ghettos that Breed and Harbour
Terrorists," *National Post,* October 11, 2016. Accessed July 30, 2017,
http://nationalpost.com/opinion/europes-no-go-zones-inside-the-lawless-ghettos-that-breed-and-
harbour-terrorists/wcm/f5027c5b-b40b-4624-b351-c373d230983f.
[263] Ibid.
[264] Jacoby, Jeff. "Why There Are Muslim Ghettos in Belgium, But Not in the US." *The Boston
Globe.* March 27, 2016. Accessed July 30, 2017.
[265] Cushman, "Europe's No Go Zones: Inside the Lawless Ghettos that Breed and Harbour
Terrorists."

of secular France or Belgium.[266] These suburbs are also dominated by gangs who make their living off of selling drugs.[267] As a result of looking for authority and endorsement, young gang members turn to radical Islamic preachers affiliated with radical Islamic movements in countries such as Morocco and Iran, and are often sponsored by foreigners.[268] Mosques become hotbeds for radical activity and the storing of weapons and explosives.[269] These suburbs push out those who do not adhere to their way of life or impose their rules on individuals living within the neighbourhood. The non-Muslim population does not enter them while police and security forces fear to enter them as well.[270] Overall, such "no-go zones" become a state within a state[271] making them extremely difficult to control and conducive to crime, violence and terrorism against the broader European societies.

Fortunately, such an issue does not exist in Canada. Nevertheless, authorities must be aware of the outcomes of ghettoization and therefore apply preventative measures to curb radicalization to violence. One of the interviewees, who works as a support worker for newcomers, noticed that there is a tendency of clustering Syrian refugees in one housing complex, specifically, 311 Alexander Ave. Winnipeg.[272] This is mainly due to a very limited amount of subsidized housing, which is more affordable for newcomers and therefore is a place where they settle. If such a trend continues and eventually grows from one housing complex to a whole neighbourhood, it could possible lead to ghettoization.

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[266] Cushman, "Europe's No Go Zones: Inside the Lawless Ghettos that Breed and Harbour Terrorists."
[267] Ibid.
[268] Ibid.
[269] Ibid.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, August 16, 2016.

***Promoting and supporting the Muslim community.*** This refers to Muslim community

leaders and political leaders of all levels: municipal, provincial, and federal. Islamophobia is a

real issue and it is important that political leaders support the Muslim community by attending its

events and connecting with it. Positive examples of collaborating and connecting with the

Muslim community will contribute to establishing a multicultural dialogue and breaking negative

stereotypes.[273] Leaders of the Muslim community, on their part, should reach out to other

communities and build connections.[274] Such promotion and support assist in spreading a positive

message about the Muslim community being just like any other community and that it should not

be regarded as "the other."

In Winnipeg, for example, Councillor Brian Mayes maintains his relationship with the

Muslim community through attending various events such as Foodoramas, open houses at

Mosques, and annual dinners. In 2016, he and his wife Dr. Alison Marshall (a professor of

religion at Brandon University) wrote a joint paper entitled "The Living and the Dead: An

Ethno-History of Islam and identity in Winnipeg and Beyond."[275] A part of this paper elaborates

on what the Muslim community in Winnipeg does to promote themselves and establish inter-

faith and multicultural dialogue. "The Winnipeg Grand Mosque on Waverley Street has

welcomed numerous federal, provincial and municipal politicians and acted as a conduit to the

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[273] Councillor Brian Mayes, St, Vital ward, July 7, 2016; Councillor Janice Lukes, St. Norbert ward, July 8, 2016
[274] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 2, June 30, 2016.
[275] Alison Marshall and B. Mayes, "The Living and the Dead: An Ethno-History of Islam and Identity in Winnipeg and Beyond," Edited by Fachrizal A. Halim and Veronika Makarova, *Islam on the Prairies: Tolerance, Pluralism and Diversity, S*askatoon: University of Saskatchewan (2016): 27-3, accessed July 30, 2017, https://www.academia.edu/25392091/The_Living_and_the_Dead_an_Ethno-history_of_Islam_and_Identity_in_Winnipeg_and_Beyond_1.

city's inter-faith religious activities."[276] "The Manitoba Islamic Association has made a strong effort in recent years to reach out to the broader community, including elected representatives, with periodic open houses, dinners to celebrate Eid al-Fitr and other events. Since 2014, the Winnipeg Grand Mosque has held a monthly Foodorama evening, each time featuring the cuisine of a different Islamic nation such as Syria, Morocco or Egypt. Foodorama has continued even after the Paris attacks, when this kind of outreach might be perceived to inflame racist feelings. By hosting this event, the mosque has demonstrated itself to be part of the Canadian multicultural fabric. Through the sharing of food, it has built bridges to the broader community and government while raising awareness about Islam."[277]

Janice Lukes, a Winnipeg City Councillor as well, has also maintained her relationship with the Muslim community through attending various events, visiting mosques and a Syrian refugee family. These may all seem as simple activities and gestures, yet they create an important line of communication and send out a positive message about the Muslim community. Such interactions also assist elected officials in understanding the culture, way of life, and the needs of the Muslim community.

*Educating*. Another initiative that can assist in countering radicalization to violence is educating Muslims about Islam and providing counter-ideologies by speaking out against violent action. As mentioned, Imams have a significant role to play - through preaching they can channel people's thoughts in various directions, through preaching about accepting other cultures and religions rather than preaching division and "us" vs. "them". As one of the interviewees

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[276] Marshall and Mayes, "The Living and the Dead: An Ethno-History of Islam and Identity in Winnipeg and Beyond," 11.
[277] Ibid.

emphasized, the Muslim community in Winnipeg is relatively new and mainly consists of immigrants, refugees and newcomers, therefore it is important that Imams speak positively about Canada and refer to it as the 'new home.'[278]

*Building awareness*. Building awareness refers to people being vocal about the issue of radicalization to violence, speaking about it both within the Muslim community and outside of it. Many respondents stated that building awareness about radicalization to violence is important for circumventing the issue.[279] This can happen in a number of ways: 1) discussing the issue of radicalization to violence within the Muslim community and speaking freely about it; 2) involving scholars to bring more clarity to such aspects as the relationship between religion and radicalization to violence; and 3) breaking down stereotypes and countering Islamophobia within the context of radicalization to violence. Having dialogue among various communities and exchanging knowledge on the issue is also necessary, since the issue of radicalization to violence is not only inherent to the Muslim community, and examples of radicalization to violence can be found throughout various communities across Canada.[280]

*Building bridges and strong communities*. Building cohesion within communities, between communities and promoting multi-cultural dialogue is also an intervention that most respondents mentioned as a preventative measure. The more people are involved with each other, the better they can see whether something is going the "wrong way", whether someone needs help or could potentially radicalize.[281] Communities need to be supportive of each other. Regardless of

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[278] Anonymous, immigrant and refugee support worker, August 16, 2016.
[279] Mohammad Anwar, Muslim community member, July 5, 2016; Yumna Gill, Muslim community member, July 10, 2016; Anonymous, Muslim community member, July 3, 2016; Anonymous, Muslim community leader 1, June 30, 2016; Dr. Dickson.
[280] Parent and Ellis III, *Countering Radicalization of Diaspora Communities in Canada, 11-12*
[281] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 2, June 30, 2016.

differences in faith, religion, or historical background, communities face similar issues - especially newcomer communities. As explained by one of the prominent Winnipeg Muslim community leaders[282], immigrants, Muslims and other faith traditions, go through very similar problems when they arrive. Therefore, reaching out to other communities is a two-way street where many commonalities can be found. Different communities can benefit from each other's support and help, thus contributing to stronger relationships and a better understanding of each other. Creating an empowering milieu is primarily the responsibility of community leaders, as they can show the value of such connections to community members and initiate the lead.[283]

*Counsellor services.* Counsellor services are particularly important for individuals who come from war zones and might be psychologically traumatized.  In Winnipeg, the AURORA Family Therapy Centre ran a pilot Newcomer Therapy Program until March 2017, which offered therapy to newcomers (grief and loss, anxiety, depression, family conflict, trauma, communication between parents and kids/teens, dealing with painful memories, isolation, addiction, etc.) free of charge.[284]  The Newcomer Employment and Education Development Services Centre (N.E.E.D.S.) has a psychiatric nurse and counsellors to address special needs of war affected children and school-aged youth.[285] In addition, the Mount Carmel Clinic has a Multicultural Wellness Program that provides free counselling services to newcomers on numerous issues, including trauma. Finally, the NorWest Co-op Community Health-Immigrant Women's

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[282] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 2, June 30, 2016.

[283] Ibid.

[284] Aurora Family Therapy Centre, *The Newcomer Therapy Program, a*ccessed July 30, 2017, http://www.aurorafamilytherapy.com/newcomer.html.

[285] Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba, *Mental Health Services, a*ccessed July 30, 2017, http://www.ircom.ca/healthcare-links/mental-health-services/.

Counselling Services is another organization that provides counselling services for newcomer women to help address violence, trauma, healthy relationships, parenting, and self-esteem.

As can be seen, there are a number of resources available in Winnipeg to newcomers in need of counsellor services and mental-health therapy. However, the issue might be in whether these services are accessed by those in need. There could be different reasons preventing a newcomer from accessing these services, such as unawareness of these services, unawareness of their own need in accessing these services, stigma around mental health issues, and people's unwillingness to reach out for help.

Since two respondents mentioned the need for greater attention to post-traumatic stress among newcomers, the assumption is that there is a gap somewhere in newcomers' accessing of these services. Further research and investigation is needed as part of counter-radicalization efforts.

*Community policing.* As explained by Constable Wong[286] and Sergeant Wytinck[287] (the Winnipeg Police), community policing (a partnership-based, collaborative effort between the police and a community[288]) creates a line of communication with communities where police interact with people in the community on a regular basis.  This action may create more trust and bring people to a level of comfort with the police while bringing the police to a level where they can relate to people.[289] An important part of community policing is having police officers that are representative of the community they serve in. This is to ensure that a message of inclusiveness

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[286] Constable Wong (Winnipeg Police), August 23, 2106.
[287] Sergeant Wytinck (Winnipeg Police), August 23, 2106.
[288] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach."
[289] Sergeant Wytinck (Winnipeg Police), August 23, 2106.

and diversity is sent out and no minority is discriminated against. Community policing is

extremely important in the prevention of crime and it is pro-active rather than re-active.

Community Policing is about becoming a part of the community through positive everyday

activities such as playing sports with youth, having conversations, and in providing opportunities

for youth to come to their museum, etc. Such activities can assist in making newcomer youth feel

more included and have a counter-radicalization effect.[290] As Sergeant Wytinck stated:

> *... you never know if a person had at some point considered acting radically. Through involvement and interaction with the Police and the rest of the community one might think: 'well, actually, I am accepted into this community, why would I do something like that?' Through these interactions, the Police hopes to have a positive effect.[291]*

    ***Countering radicalization to violence on a theological level.*** Dr. Dickson[292] believes that it is

extremely important to provide a counter-narrative on a theological level. He looks up to

theologians like Abdullah Bin Bayyah, who has worked to create peace forums around the world.

At these forums, top clerics come together and release statements, fatwas and rulings, which

explain why Muslims should be safe in non-Muslim societies. It's a direct response to what ISIS

does to people, and it provides a religious justification as to why Muslims should be safe. Dr.

Dickson appreciates Abdullah Bin Bayyah's work for grounding discourse in the same sources

that groups like ISIS use. In their videos, ISIS invokes Islamic texts and Islamic law by quoting

the Quran and issuing fatwas and the way of responding to this behaviour, on a theological level,

is by also using the law and the texts. It is not the responsibility of a regular Muslim to provide

these counter-narratives, therefore theologians have a significant role to play in this regard.[293]

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[290] Constable Wong (Winnipeg Police), August 23, 2106.
[291] Sergeant Wytinck (Winnipeg Police), August 23, 2016.
[292] Dr. Dickson.
[293] Ibid.

The following three themes: the role of religion, terminology, and refugees, which prominently came up in the case study, are not necessarily causes of or solutions to radicalization to violence, yet they received significant attention from respondents and are linked to the issue. The role of religion is a serious concern due to its highly-debated nature, as well as the terminology – an issue arising primarily due to its emotional aspect. The issue of refugees emerged throughout the interviews, most likely, due to the recent inflow of Syrian refugees to Winnipeg and the problems arising with their sudden influx. All these matters have value in understanding radicalization to violence and ways of countering it, and are serious concerns both within and outside the Muslim community.

**The Role of Religion.**

The role of religion in radicalization to violence is a highly-debated matter. It is interesting to note that the majority of respondents, who identify as Muslims, reject the point that Islam plays a role in radicalization to violence. They explained that religion is often used simply as a justification, yet, it is not a valid one. One of the prominent local community leaders[294] suggests that it takes a lot of pulling out of context to put any justification together. "Harming innocent people, non-combatants, elderly, women, etc., has always been strictly prohibited. The whole idea of bombs, burning, and incinerating communities, has always been against Islamic teachings, specifically, it has been condemned. Therefore, one really needs to pick and choose from the teachings to make it seem that one should resort to violence."[295]

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[294] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 2, June 30, 2016.
[295] Ibid.

On the other hand, two of the interviewees, who come from Muslim backgrounds, yet have

either abandoned their religion, or just reduced its place in their life to heritage and tradition,

state that there are specific Quranic verses that encourage violence, such as "I will cast terror into

the hearts of those who disbelieve. Therefore, strike off their heads and strike off every fingertip

of them."[296]

Yumna Gill[297] explains that the Quran is often misrepresented because it does, in fact,

talk about every aspect of life. "It does talk about violence, but it also talks numerous times

about being compassionate. If you pick and choose from the Quran, you can interpret Islam as a

violent religion or as a peaceful and loving religion. But neither of those are true."[298] Yumna

suggests that religion is perfect in the sense that it talks about every aspect of life, yet it is people

who make it bad or good.[299]

Dr. Dickson[300] also stresses the importance of interpretation and understanding that religion is

not static - it evolves, develops and changes with place and time. Moreover, he suggests that

> *...a part of the analytical problem is what exactly do we mean by 'religion'? What we understand as religion changes over time – what we call religion now, wasn't seen as religion five-hundred years ago. If a Catholic person was asked about the world, s/he would say that there are heavens and earth, devils and angels, and there is hell. Today, we consider this religion, but hundreds of years ago it was just how the world was seen, and not regarded as religion.*

Dr. Dickson's understanding of ISIS and his research on groups alike suggest that they

understand the world in largely religious terms – "it's religion overlapping with politics, and part

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[296] Quran 8:12, https://discover-the-truth.com/2014/09/29/quran-812-i-will-cast-terror-into-the-hearts-of-those-who-disbelieve-therefore-strike-off-their-heads/.
[297] Yumna Gill, Muslim community member, July 10, 2016.
[298] Ibid.
[299] Ibid.
[300] Dr. Dickson, July 16, 2016.

of the problem is just precisely how we are defining these categories."[301] The way many ISIS

fighters see the world is through religion and their religious identity, which gets downplayed. It

is a theological movement first and foremost. However, it is not right to blame religion for

radicalization to violence.[302]

> *"I wonder if when we blame religion for youth radicalization to violence, even though
> this happens to be a theological or religious movement, in my opinion, part of the
> problem is that we assume that only religion or theology radicalizes, which is completely
> historically false."[303] "It's too simplistic to blame spirituality and dangers arise from
> overly simplistic understandings of things like religion and theology. Nevertheless,
> completely disassociating religion from groups like ISIS is also counterproductive. ISIS is
> a profoundly theological movement. It is not sophisticated theology, it is crude theology
> which is married to the most basic inclinations of human beings such as savagery and
> violence. Also, religion should not only have the status of something that is purely good.
> People want to see all the bad things as politics and good things as religion, yet that is
> also misleading. However, ISIS does not define Islam, and Ms. X[304] and other community
> leaders have struggled with separating Islam from ISIS in people's minds, because if this
> is not done, it leads Muslims here into danger."[305]*

**Terminology.**

The concern around terminology largely stems from the debate about the role of religion.

Terms that link radicalization to violence and terrorism with Islam and Muslims are a sensitive

issue for those who identify as Muslims. Most of the Muslims interviewed stress the importance

of choosing terms properly. Such terms as 'Muslim extremist', 'Islamist Extremist,' and 'Jihadist

terrorist' are considered to misrepresent Islam and Muslims and only hinder countering

radicalization to violence. Linking faith with radicalization to violence primarily feeds into the

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[301] Dr. Dickson, July 16, 2016.
[302] Ibid.
[303] Ibid.
[304] Prominent Muslim community leader.
[305] Dr. Dickson, July 16, 2016.

issue of Islamophobia, because it sends a message to those, who are not knowledgeable on the issue, that a direct relationship between Muslims/Islam and terrorism exists. It codes "Islam" and "Muslim" as bearers of extremism and contributes to spreading fear and division within society. Even though 'Islamist' is in the term, 'Islamist Extremism' came to be used to acknowledge the difference and distinguish between mainstream Islam and radical Islam promoted by ISIS. This distinction may not be visible to a regular Canadian who is not particularly knowledgeable in the field.

Dr. Dickson prefers "Salafi-jihadism" over "Islamist extremism," even though some people may not be comfortable with this term.

> *It is a scientific approach –at least it is a term which captures some of what we are dealing with in a technical way. It is also a term which people, who are involved with the movement, relate to themselves. It is not a term imposed by the outsiders, it is a term that reflects how the movement sees itself. The problem with "Islamist extremism," even though it's an extreme interpretation of Islam, is that it is too general. Salafi is a big category, and it is unfortunate how Salafism gets conflated too much, and that is why 'Salafi jihadism' is a better term. The Quran doesn't use 'jihad' for fighting. 'Jihad' is a sacred term, so 'jihadism' is more appropriate. 'Salafi Jihadism' is an ideological use of the term. This term has some technical accuracy, it's an identifiable ideology, and one can pinpoint to how it differentiates from Islam and where it differentiates. It's a doctrine that mainstream Sunni Islam has never adopted and wrote off as heretical very early on. Then, in the 20th century it got fused with understandings of the Islamic State. This is one of the key components and this is why it's important to be scientific about it. "Islamic extremism" is too imprecise and can mean anything, as well as it does the damage of constantly coding Islam and Muslim with extremism.*[306]

There is no term on which everyone agrees, yet there are terms that can do more damage than others. Terminology within the context of radicalization to violence and terrorism should be considered at all levels of government, in the media, as well as within communities.

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[306] Dr. Dickson, July 16, 2016.

**Newcomers.** [307]

Another prominent concern that emerged from the case study was regarding newcomers, mainly newcomer refugees from Syria. The major issue is their integration into Winnipeg's multicultural society. One of the key aspects of integrating newcomers is ensuring they learn English. Language is essential for all aspects of life – getting around the city, finding a job, and connecting with the local community, etc. Several interviewees had experience working with newcomers and could provide insight. They explained that the process of bringing in refugees happened relatively quickly, therefore not enough time and thought was invested in the process of their integration. By February 2016, when the third inflow of refugees came, many schools that were designated to provide English language classes to newcomers had already been filled. The refugees that did not get access to languages classes had to wait until September 2016 to get into one, and were left without language courses for 6 months. Considering the fact that the Federal program for refugees provides financial support for only one year, after which newcomers must find other means of survival and start repaying the government, 6 months without language courses is a significant issue.

Another problem is the shortage of affordable housing. The compensation that refugees receive for housing is usually not enough to afford good living conditions and some refugees end up living in groups of four or more people to one room. In Winnipeg, there is a program called IRCOM HOUSE which has been providing housing for refugees and newcomers since 1991

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[307] All information provided by respondents in regards to newcomers and issues around their integration is strictly confidential. To protect respondents' confidentiality reference to interviewees is made only where possible.

under the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) program. However, such assistance is offered only for one year and spots are limited.

This is not to say that the government has failed at integrating refugees into the city's pulse. Federally and provincially funded non-profit organizations in Winnipeg, such as IRCOM, the NEEDS Centre and Welcome Place offer various forms of assistance and guidance for newcomers around numerous aspects of life and for different age groups. However, issues with integrating newcomers into the city, as the study has shown, do exist and require much more attention. This is one of the areas where the Muslim and/or broader Winnipeg community can't play a primary role and it is the government structures, such as the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, that ought to take on the initiative.

Nevertheless, collaboration between the Muslim and broader Winnipeg community and the government is essential. First, newcomers require mentors who speak their language and can assist them during the first few months of coming to Canada. Such services have been provided, but there was a shortage of available mentors. Potentially, this resource could be best found within the Muslim community. Second, as practice has shown, previous newcomers, who have already settled to some extent, come as volunteers to help the more-recent refugees. These volunteers have been through similar experiences and are familiar with the nuances, therefore they are able to provide better assistance to the newcomers. Perhaps, their experiences can be shared with other volunteers who don't have such insight.

Also, as suggested by Janice Lukes,[308] it is necessary that the information provided to refugees on various websites be articulated in simpler and more accessible English. Since her

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[308] Councillor Janice Lukes, St. Norbert ward, July 8, 2016.

ward boasts a prominent Chinese community, she designed a map of the University area that was translated into Mandarin. As much as the Chinese newcomers appreciated the map and found it helpful, she was later advised by a group of individuals knowledgeable on immigration matters, that it would have been much more useful and effective if the map was designed in simple English. Learning the recipient country's language is paramount for newcomer integration.

The reason that newcomers came up within the context of countering radicalization is because there is concern that they might be more prone to radicalization to violence. This is primarily a concern for those who come from conflict zones, as they might be coming from a more radical and violent environment, and experiencing post-traumatic stress. Overall, newcomers may face difficulties integrating and adopting to a new country, experiencing socio-economic issues, going though an identity crisis, and finding it difficult to "break ties with the past and start a new life." All of these factors could make them more susceptible to radicalization to violence. This is not to suggest that newcomers will radicalize to violence, yet well thought-through integration programs are necessary within the context of countering radicalization.

**The Role of Community and collaboration with government structures.**

All of my respondents agreed that the community has a role to play in countering radicalization to violence. Aside from the different responses about how exactly the community can contribute, one specific distinction came up – not only can the Muslim community play a role in countering radicalization to violence, but so can other communities in Winnipeg.

The Muslim community's specific role in countering radicalization to violence can be summed up by the following observations with regards to conflict prevention: a) community

leaders raising awareness on the issue, talking about it, holding workshops; b) Imams and community leaders providing counter-extremism/violence narratives; c) reaching out to other communities, and contributing to the multi-cultural dialogue; and d) making the community more open/accessible to outsiders in order to break up stereotypes and decrease Islamophobia by way of holding open houses at Mosques, and in organizing and participating in joint events with other communities. In Winnipeg, the practice of holding open-houses in Mosques, especially at times when various terrorist attacks happened, such as the one in Paris, showed that they are worth doing, because they drew hundreds of visitors to the Mosques.[309] Two major Muslim organizations – Manitoba Islamic Association (MIA) and the Islamic Social Services Association (ISSA) have held programs and workshops that promoted awareness on radicalization to violence and encouraged discussion. Even though it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of such workshops, a prominent community leader[310] sees such initiatives as beneficial to countering radicalization to violence. He believes that the advantage and the unique resources that the Muslim community has is knowledge of itself, knowledge of the different groups, as well as sects of Islam and different cultures within the community. "The community has knowledge of different groups within groups that could be becoming insular within the Muslim community, and if such a problem arises, the Muslim community would have more knowledge and understanding of it - other people wouldn't have this internal knowledge."[311]

Yumna Gill[312] also supports such initiatives, but explains that it is always the same leaders and the same volunteers. She would like to see greater involvement of the Muslim community,

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[309] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 1, June 30, 2016; Anonymous, Muslim community leader 2, June 30, 2016.
[310] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 1, June 30, 2016.
[311] Anonymous, Muslim community leader 1, June 30, 2016.
[312] Yumna Gill, Muslim community member, July 10, 2016

which could lead to a greater impact in terms of building inter-faith dialogue and breaking stereotypes.

While speaking about communities in general and countering radicalization to violence, one of the concerns that my respondents raised was for the need of providing more afterschool programs and getting kids and youth involved in both the Muslim and broader communities. However, afterschool programs usually require government funding. Community fundraising is an option, however it is more suitable for short-term programs and events. Anything long-term requires more planning and stable budgeting. The financial component is an issue for communities, however it is a resource which provincial and federal governments can provide to new immigrants to the city. This would certainly require cooperation and feedback going both ways between government structures and the community. More research needs to be done about how this collaboration can happen and how the government assesses what funds to provide and to which communities. Since afterschool and youth programs are so important in preventing deviant behaviours such as joining gangs and terrorist groups, it is something that deserves attention within the context of countering radicalization to violence.

While communities can play a significant role in countering radicalization to violence on their own, there are numerous steps that can be taken in collaboration with government structures. A voiced concern of my interviewees is the need for political leaders to change their vocabulary and de-link Islam from terrorism. Even though it is up to the political leaders to own what they say, it is the Muslim community that can help elaborate on the terminology and specifically indicate the misuse of terms. A good example of such an effort is the "United Against Terrorism" handbook, co-issued in 2015 by the National Council of Canadian Muslims and the Islamic Social Services Association. This handbook emphasizes that the term "jihad" is a noble

term in Islam and calling a terrorist a jihadist is only counter productive because it gives them a

legitimate status.[313] "Jihad is an Arabic term meaning striving, struggling and exertion in the path

of good. Every day a Muslim struggles with his/her desires and does good and strives to be a

better human being he/she is performing jihad."[314] It is not clear how far this initiative went and

whether it even reached any political leader's attention, not mentioning spurring any

considerations in their use of terminology. However, if initiatives like these are taken seriously

by government they can have a strong impact in changing political narrative around the issues of

radicalization to violence and terrorism.

Noteworthy is that this ISSA handbook was written in collaboration with the RCMP,

however, at the last minute the RCMP withdrew its support, minimizing its contribution only to

Section 3 of the handbook entitled "Understanding Radicalization and the role of RCMP in law

enforcement and national security." "After a final review of the handbook, the RCMP could not

support the adversarial tone set by elements of the booklet and, therefore, directed RCMP

Manitoba not to proceed with this initiative."[315] Even though the RCMP did not provide any

further publicly available elaborations on its actions, this incident suggests ongoing tensions

between the Muslim community and the RCMP.

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[313] Islamic Social Services Association Inc., National Council of Canadian Muslims, The RCMP, "United Against Terrorism. A Collaborative Effort Towards a Secure, Inclusive and Just Canada," (2014), 34, accessed July 30, 2017, https://www.nccm.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/UAT-HANDBOOK-WEB-VERSION-SEPT-27-2014.pdf.
[314] Ibid, 10.
[315] Royal Canadian Mounted Police, RCMP Response: United Against Terrorism Handbook. Ontario, September 30, 2014. accessed October 2016, http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2014/30/rcmp-response-united-against-terrorism-handbookhttp://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2014/30/rcmp-response-united-against-terrorism-handbook

**Key Findings and Conclusions.**

The interviews shed light on specific reasons and factors for radicalization to violence and how they are perceived by interviewees. It was interesting to note how these reasons and factors relate to all three levels of analysis discussed in Chapter Four – micro, meso and macro. On the micro level, for example, respondents mentioned perceived injustices, isolation, identity crisis, and non-diagnosed post traumatic stress; on the meso level – ghettoization, and imams preaching a certain way; on the macro – political context/hypocrisy of the West, historical roots, and the vacuum in offering utopian visions of a better society. Respondents viewed all levels of analysis equally important, which reinforces the need for an all-level inclusive analysis of root causes for radicalization to violence

When discussing ways of addressing root causes, interviewees highlighted the value of community involvement. At appears that not only the Muslim community can pay a role when countering al-Qaeda and ISIS inspired terrorism, but the broader community as well. Each one of us can contribute to solving the issue simply by becoming more aware, spreading awareness, avoiding stereotyping and standing against racism/Islamophobia. The participants also stressed the importance of raising awareness around the issue to both clarify certain aspects of the problem and break down existing stereotypes. Bringing more clarity and knowledge to communities around the issue of radicalization to violence is the first step to developing a robust and comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy in Canada. Building such an awareness and providing platforms for people to speak up and discuss the issue is a way for the community to get involved and contribute to finding solutions to the problem.

Another interesting aspect was the way individuals related to the issue of radicalization to violence, the interest they showed, and the value they placed in my research. Considering that

none of my respondents have ever been directly affected by a terrorist attack, yet expressed

sincere concern for the problem, suggests it to be an important one.

Based on the interviews, it appears that the way to consider radicalization to violence is

not only from a security perspective, but also from the perspective of how the issue effects

society in general. One aspect of a terrorist attack is the casualties and physical injuries that it

causes, the suffering it brings to people who lost their loved ones, the psychological effect it has

on those affected by the attack, and the terror that it spreads. Yet there is another aspect that goes

beyond these consequences. Radicalization to violence brings numerous concomitant issues as

the interviews suggest. The impact these concomitant issues have on weakening community

fabric is a significant concern as it effects peoples' everyday lives. These concomitant issues

create a cycle of consequences which feed into radicalization to violence and create favorable

conditions for terrorism.

One more finding that stood out from the interviews, was the concern around newcomer

integration. Newcomers are seen to be more prone to radicalization to violence for a variety of

reasons, while problems with integration are thought to aggravate the issue. As the interviews

suggest, there is a need for better elaborated newcomer programs. The news reported extensively

about Canada's success in accepting refugees throughout 2015 and 2016, however, little

information was available about the "not so successful" cases, and the problems that these

newcomers have faced and continue to face. Even though the 2015-2016 influx of refugees was

an ad -hoc situation, it is a great opportunity to adjust and improve our immigration and refugee

policies and programs. Based on the current state of affairs in the world – ongoing conflicts

which cause large migrations of refugees -  and the Canadian liberal government's policy of

accepting more refugees as opposed to the previous Conservative government, it is likely that

such influxes of refugees may become a rule rather than an exception.

Taking into consideration that the interviews reflect the local situation in Winnipeg, the

issue of newcomer integration could be specific solely to this city. Alternatively, it could be

representative of numerous other cities across Canada. Moreover, it could even be a general

characteristic of radicalization to violence in Canada. Nevertheless, if the interviews were

conducted prior to the influx of Syrian newcomers in 2015, this concern might have not even

arisen. At any rate, this suggests that counter-radicalization efforts need to be time and place

specific, they need to take into account specifics of locality and present environment, while

countering radicalization needs to be an ongoing and evolving strategy.

Overall, this case study showed that some findings regarding radicalization to violence

became available only though conducting interviews. This suggests that communities have the

key to knowledge, information, and experience. This aspect makes them essential in countering

radicalization to violence.

**Chapter 6. Answering Questions and Drawing Conclusions.**

This chapter summarizes overall key findings from the research to address questions posed within the thesis. These overall key findings from the study support the statement that the role of community is integral in countering radicalization to violence. Concluding remarks suggest further research that is needed on the issue.

## Why do we fail to predict radicalization to violence?

The absence of a terrorist profile or a specific path to radicalization to violence makes it extremely difficult to predict whether an individual will radicalize to violence. Accepting the fact that we can never be sure whether an individual will radicalization to violence or not can be of benefit to the community in the following ways: 1) we can target factors contributing to a favourable environment for radicalization to violence, rather than targeting specific individuals – which may be a dangerous thing to do (targeting wrong individuals can only lead to resentment); 2) we will avoid stereotyping and drawing wrong generalizations, thus permitting for a deeper understanding of what factors are at play when one radicalizes to violence; and, 3) we will be less likely to overlook someone on the path of radicalization to violence who may not fit the stereotypical profile of a terrorist. Therefore, embracing our failure to predict radicalization to violence only increases our chances in countering the issue.

## Why do individuals radicalize to violence?

The numerous push and pull factors influencing an individual to radicalize to violence leave us with no single answer to this question. Just like there is no single path to radicalization to violence, there are numerous factors contributing to one deciding to become a terrorist. Nevertheless, it is a rational choice, which means that there is some type of logic involved. As

Moghaddam already described in his staircase model, this logic narrows down the further it proceeds, leaving an individual trapped in one or two choices of further action to take. If we understand the logic that leads to radicalization to violence, we are at better odds of challenging it.

Understanding the context and dynamics of various drivers conducive to violent extremism and motivations that assist in exploiting these conditions will assist the government in addressing them and diminishing their effect. Individual backgrounds and motivations, collective grievances and victimization, distortion and misuse of beliefs, political ideologies and ethnic and cultural differences, leadership and social networks[316] - can all play a role in one's radicalization to violence. Using the micro-, meso-, and macro- levels of analyses of the root causes of radicalization to violence ensures that all factors, such as historical roots, political context, racism, islamophobia and others are considered.

## Why government alone cannot counter radicalization to violence?

To address this issue, we ought to acknowledge that terrorism is not only a security issue, but also a problem that affects community fabric. With radicalization to violence arising from within communities, it needs to be countered with the help of those communities. Government is a facilitator and provides auxiliary resources to communities such as financing, management, distribution of resources, but does not have the resources that the communities possess. Government alone cannot provide a sense of belonging for an individual, neither can it assist with establishing one's national and religious identity. Alone, it cannot clarify the difference between radicalization and radicalization to violence or provide effective counterpropaganda.

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[316] United Nations, *Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.*

This is not to diminish the role that the government can play in the task of countering

radicalization to violence. Its primary role is to stay attentive to communities and their needs in

countering this issue as well as in facilitating resources and dialogue on the matter. Just like the

Internet acts as a facilitator for radicalization to violence, yet it is social networks that seem to be

primary in one's radicalization to violence, the Government acts as a facilitator for countering

radicalization to violence, while society and communities are primary in preventing one from

taking on a terrorist path.

## What tools and means are most appropriate for countering radicalization to violence?

On February 12, 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution of the Secretary

General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/RES/70/254).[317] This plan makes an

important recommendation pertinent to national plans of action. It emphasizes that "national

plans should be developed in a multidisciplinary manner, to include countering and preventing

violent extremism measures, with input from a wide range of government actors, such as law

enforcement, social service providers and ministries of education, youth and religious affairs, as

well as non - governmental actors, including youth; families; women; religious, cultural and

educational leaders; civil society organizations; the media; and the private sector."[318] Also, the

Plan stresses that "analyses of local and national drivers of violent extremism form an important

point of departure for developing national plans"[319] - meaning that appropriate tools will vary not

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[317]United Nations CTITF, *Geneva Conference On Preventing Violent Extremism - The Way Forward,* April, 2016, accessed July 30, 2017, https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/geneva-conference-preventing-violent-extremism.
[318] United Nations, *Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.*
[319] United Nations, *Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.*

only by country, but by regions within a country as well. Considering this multidisciplinary and local approach, we can draw the following conclusions regarding appropriate methods and tools for countering radicalization to violence based on the Winnipeg Case study and the supporting academic and policy literature:

1) **Changing narrative** encompasses the following: diminishing the appeal of terrorist organizations through providing counter-propaganda by credible voices; changing language that appears to be counter-productive and leads to misunderstanding of the issue; educating and building awareness through differentiating between what radicalization to violence is and what it isn't; providing counter-narrative on a theological level;  and breaking-up stereotypes and de-linking radicalization to violence from any one religion or ethnicity.

2) **Strengthening community fabric through inter- and intra-faith dialogue** includes the outreach of community leaders and strengthening relationships between communities through organizing joint events and exchanging experiences; promoting the Muslim community (in our case it is the Muslim community, yet this can be applicable to any minority community) to the broader community via open houses and other events; local elected representatives and authorities promoting minority communities through communication and interactions such as the example of city councillors attending Muslim community's events. The UN Secretary General's Plan recommends to "engage religious leaders to provide a platform for intra-and interfaith dialogue and discussions through which to promote tolerance and understanding between communities, and voice their rejection of violent doctrines by emphasizing the peaceful and humanitarian values inherent in their theologies." Accentuating the

peaceful and humanitarian values inherent in Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, or any other world religion practiced by a significant percentage of Canada's population is an important part of providing a counter-narrative to the terrorist ideology rooted in theology and religion. An important aspect of providing counter-narrative and counter-propaganda is ensuring it discourages radicalization to violence rather than simply radicalization. It should discourage violent action and terror, but not necessarily a non-mainstream understanding of how society should be.

3) **Integration of newcomers.** Perhaps, the local aspect of methods and tools applicable to countering radicalization to violence can be best seen through this approach. In Winnipeg, the influx of Syrian refugees from 2015-2016 increased the demand for support services specifically for this group of newcomers. This meant the need to have enough Arab-speaking staff, counselling services for treating PTSD, and affordable housing among others. These particularities were relevant for those cities, such as Winnipeg, that welcomed Syrian refugees. For numerous other cities across Canada these services would not have been a need and, therefore, would not have been an appropriate tool for countering radicalization to violence. Appropriate tools are time and location specific, therefore a good counter-terrorism policy is always reassessed and based around on-going research. The integration of newcomers involves not only assistance at the initial stage of their settlement. It is an ongoing process that can be broken down in terms, such as the first year of integration, $5^{th}$, and $10^{th}$, etc. At different stages of integration, there are different needs to be addressed. It is important to view newcomer and immigrant integration as part of the counter-terrorism strategy, since even second-generation immigrants could be victims of

terrorism propaganda and might even have a higher probability for radicalization to violence.[320] Integrating newcomers also includes avoiding their ghettoization and keeping neighbourhoods diverse.

4) **Community policing** has an important role to play in countering homegrown radicalization to violence as it establishes a trustworthy relationship between communities and the security forces. If communities trust local law enforcement, there is higher chance that an individual on the path of radicalization to violence will be stopped and intercepted before they commit a violent act. Also, a positive relationship between security forces and communities gives the former a better understanding of what goes on in the communities and what the current issues are.

There may be many other methods of preventing radicalization to violence, which may be specific to a different location/region in Canada. The aforementioned are conclusions drawn from a relatively small case study and based on opinions of those I interviewed. Nevertheless, the vast evidence found in scholarly research on terrorism and counterterrorism supports the opinions provided by my interviewees. This suggests certain commonalities between studies of different regions, nevertheless it does not imply that each country/region/city will not have its own specifics. This is an important aspect for further research on counter-radicalization.

### What means and resources do communities possess and governments lack?

Perhaps, this is the main question raised by the thesis as it identifies the absolute necessity of community involvement in countering radicalization to violence. First, as we've already established, the issue of radicalization to violence is more than a security issue in terms

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[320] This has not been proven, yet research is being done in the field with such hypothesis. (Saad Khan's research on second generation immigrants).

of conventional understanding of security. It would be more appropriate to identify the issue as pertaining to community security. As defined by the OSCE, community security "goes beyond a focus on physical security and crime, and also includes a wide range of issues affecting the quality of life of both men and women in the community, such as anti-social behavior and social disorder"[321]. As seen from the Winnipeg Case Study, it is community security that is at stake for individuals concerned with the issue of radicalization to violence. Since community security is closely related to the degree of cohesion and resilience of that community,[322] its role in ensuring this cohesion and resilience is inevitable. Cohesion is built around shared interests and goals, mutual knowledge, a sense of collective identity and belonging, mutual understanding and trust.[323] In a multicultural community, which is the case of Winnipeg and throughout Canada in general, these can be achieved primarily through dialogue and mutual work on issues such as countering radicalization to violence.

Second, communities have resources such as knowledge of themselves and their current issues. They have insight and first-hand experience of the issues that affect them and have the best practises of dealing with them. Ethnic, cultural and religious communities have the necessary language skills, cultural knowledge and conflict resolution skills, and therefore see the issue through the eyes of that community, contributing to an overall better understanding of the matter. They can identify an individual on the path of radicalization to violence prior to invention by security forces. As an example, one of the interviewees, who chose to stay anonymous, identified and reported to the RCMP an individual who was radicalizing to violence. The RCMP

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[321] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach," 66.
[322] Ibid.
[323] Ibid.

monitored the suspect for 2 years and eventually captured him in Ottawa with bomb preparations found in his house.[324]

Finally, communities hold access to public support for government action. Engaging communities, making them more involved and aware of the issue should lead to both better guidance for government action as well as support for it. Public support and participation increase accountability and effectiveness of counter terrorism measures.[325]

**Why is cooperation between governments and communities essential?**

Just like communities have resources that governments lack, governments have resources that are scarce within communities. Since preventing radicalization to violence is a long-term strategy that needs a comprehensive approach with planning and coordinating, it requires leadership, financing, and research. The federal government can pool these resources. Experience, knowledge and skills found within communities, as well as financing and coordination provided by the government are necessary for developing and implementing counter-radicalization strategies, making cooperation between communities and governments essential.

We have seen some initial steps of this cooperation such as the RCMP's Community Outreach program and the National Security Awareness round table. We have also seen problems of such cooperation. Yet, it should not discourage community – government

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[324] Anonymous, July 7
[325] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach."

partnerships on addressing this issue. In fact, more experience is needed to learn to circumvent and address the issues and difficulties that arise from this cooperation.

An important fact that emerged during the interviews was the necessity for more feedback between government structures and communities. During an interview, a support worker of a newcomer support centre[326] explained that even though there is regular feedback from their centre to the federal government regarding their use and need of funding, there is a lack of communication about the challenges faced by the centre in providing assistance to newcomers. Since the federal government sponsors the support centres and their programs, weekly/monthly/quarterly/annual reports are produced and sent to federal government structures to either begin, stop, increase/decrease, or continue the funding of certain programs. In some way, this can be considered feedback, yet it is not sufficient for an in-depth understanding of both the failures and achievements of the programs provided by their civil society NGOs. Support centres have great insight on challenges faced by newcomers, ways of addressing them, as well as an understanding of the shortcomings of immigration policies that impact the integration of newcomers. As distant as this issue may seem from preventing radicalization to violence, it is not. The integration of newcomers – part of preventing radicalization to violence - begins with providing the necessary tools and resources for their settlement, which, once again, requires coordination and financing from the government.

Elaboration of any policy or program, be it immigration programs, or those assuring security, require an understanding of issues pertaining to them. Such issues are best understood through the first-hand experience of people who are subject to these policies and programs.

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[326] For confidentiality reasons, the names of both the support worker and support centre are not disclosed.

Subsequently, hearing out stakeholders' opinions on the issue is important. Further research that implements the qualitative research methodology that resorts to interviews introduced in this thesis, possibly with some alterations and improvements, will advance the prevention of radicalization to violence and assist in understanding the issue from the different points of view of various stakeholders. Such research can be an important vehicle for strengthening community-government collaboration on countering radicalization to violence.

## Concluding Remarks.

The issue of countering radicalization to violence cuts across many areas of social life. It is not only an issue pertaining to the field of assuring national and domestic security, as it spreads much further due to numerous concomitant problems that it entails. Addressing the issue requires dealing with all these problems in a complex fashion. Such a comprehensive approach can be best provided through active community involvement and government cooperation.

Learning more about the issue through empowering the voices of stakeholders is an important part of elaborating an effective prevention and intervention strategy. This research shows the importance of community-involvement and suggests that stakeholders have opinions, are willing to share their experience and contribute to a better understanding of the issue.

More research enabling stakeholders' voices to be heard and included is encouraged. Comparing the results of research that implements a similar qualitative methodology, yet is conducted in different locations across Canada, could assist in both drawing generalizations and in identifying particularities of different regions. Overall, this can contribute to the development of a coherent and community-inclusive counter violent extremism strategy in Canada.

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