

Brief Review of the Literature

Within the past thirty years, terrorism has changed from being an esoteric, Arnold Schwarzenegger or James Bond movie plot to a ubiquitous topic for multiple fields of business, research, government, and education (Silber & Bhatt, 2007). Terrorism is “an act of violence (domestic or international), usually committed against non-combatants, and aimed to achieve behavioral change and political objectives by creating fear in a larger population” (Doosje et al., 2016, p. 79). This definition’s salient elements are the element of violence and the purpose to change behavior or politics.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)—the United States of America’s national domestic law enforcement and intelligence agency—separates terrorism into three buckets: international, domestic, and homegrown violent extremists (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2016). Direction and motivation are the key designators for the three types (Bjelopera, 2013): Domestic terrorism is an act of terror motivated and directed by a US-based person; International terrorism is an act motivated and directed by a foreign individual or international figure (Jarboe, 2002); and, Homegrown violent extremist (HVE) is an individual motivated by a foreign actor by directed by a domestic one (Bjelopera, 2013).

US-based terrorism research often focuses on the former two areas, possibly because it is easy for these researchers to mentally disassociate with the actors based on religious, ethnic, or family value differences. Domestic terrorism actors, on the contrary are usually more similar than dissimilar to the average American populace—sharing similar backgrounds, religious and political views, and family values. This similarity makes it more difficult to parse out the often-subtle differences between non-criminal Americans and potential domestic terrorism actors.

Domestic Terrorism

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), domestic terrorism threats are generally summed up as “Americans attacking Americans based on U.S.-based extremist ideologies” (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2009, ¶ 2). Domestic terrorism can take many forms, like sovereign citizens, white supremacists, animal or earth rights criminal extremists, or anarchists. Many of these forms are more relatable to movements or collectives than groups. The key to understanding these movements is that the criminal extremism goes beyond protected views to civil disobedience, violence, and other criminal actions.

Over the past several decades, terrorism has cost the economy billions of dollars in direct and associated, indirect costs (Enders & Olson, n.d.). In addition to the costs, many individuals have been killed as a result of domestic terrorism. Two decades ago, the April 19, 1995 Oklahoma City bombing was the most deadly domestic terrorism incidents in United States history (Bjelopera, 2013). Timothy McVeigh’s motivation for the attack was primarily anti-government; however, McVeigh’s co-conspirator, Terry Nichols, self-identified as a sovereign citizen (FBI Counterterrorism Analysis Section, 2011; Hersterman, 2013).

Domestic terrorism appears to be becoming important again for the Department of Justice, who recently reestablished a specialized task force on the topic (Bjelopera, 2014). As the United States continues to pursue greater understanding of this topic, it is important to identify the main subcomponents of domestic terrorism.

Animal/Environmental Rights Criminal Extremists. Between 1996 and 2001, eleven individuals allegedly committed acts of domestic terrorism in California, Colorado, Oregon, Wyoming, and Washington (Department of Justice, 2006). The loose-knit group, known as “the Family”, committed arson and other vandalism at horse facilities, lumber companies, and other animal or environmental-focused sites across the Western states (*USA v. Dabee et al*, 2006).

Both animal and environmental rights criminal extremists believe their respective foci have rights and should be treated humanely (Bjelopera, 2013). For the former, animal related business (e.g., fur farms; puppy mills; etc.) and organizations that conduct research using animals are targets; environmental rights typically target organizations disrupting natural habitats. The two many criminal elements are the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and Earth Liberation Front (ELF).

The key motivations for both animal and environmental rights criminal extremists appears to be the protection of entities who are unable to protect themselves (e.g., animals, plants, etc.). This mirrors other forms of domestic terrorism, like the anti-abortion extremists, but it appears unlikely any animal or environmental rights activists are part of that movement.

Anarchists. Between 1978 and 1995, Ted Kaczynski, as known as (AKA) “Unabomber”, mailed or placed sixteen bombs that resulted in three deaths and nine injuries (“Affidavit of Assistant Special Agent in Charge, FBI San Francisco,” 1996, “Theodore Kaczynski Indicted in Sacramento,” 1996, *United States v. Kaczynski*, 2001). Kaczynski identified as a domestic terrorist, with some of his writings leaning toward anarchism and others toward environmental rights (“Affidavit of Assistant Special Agent in Charge, FBI San Francisco,” 1996; Barnett, 2015).

Most frequently seen embedded among non-criminal political activists at national and international political events (e.g., Republican National Convention; World Trade Organization; etc.), anarchists’ core value is a desire for change or revolution (Bjelopera, 2013). Many anarchists believe society should be void of government, laws, and authority (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2010).

With anarchists, the individual takes a smaller government ideal to the extreme, believing that society can function without a government structure. While there are small instances in which society does function with very little government, history has shown there needs to be structure in order to prevent negative elements from controlling all the resources.

Anti-Abortion Extremists. On May 31, 2009, an anti-abortion activist, Scott Roeder, shot and killed Wichita, Kansas-area doctor George Tiller (A. Young, 2009). Tiller, who had twice before been the target of anti-abortion activism, was known for providing late-term abortions. Roeder was associated with the anti-abortion movement, but had not been arrested before for anything similar (Pilkington, 2010).

Ever since abortion became legal in the United States through the *Roe v. Wade* decision, abortion providers and clinics have been targets of extremists (Stack, 2015; A. Young, 2009). As was the case with Roeder, these anti-abortion extremists believe they are waging a holy war against murderers (Pilkington, 2010).

As identified above, anti-abortion extremists are focused on protecting the rights of an individual who is unable to protect their own rights—the fetus. Debate surrounding this topic focuses on when life actually begins and instances where a woman was raped.

White Supremacists. Since September 11, 2001, Sikh Americans have been the target of many hate crimes (Afridi, 2013). Sikhs, who wear turbans (vice kufis or hijabs), are often mistaken for Muslim Americans. In 2012, an individual with connections to the white supremacist movement, Wade Michael Page, killed six people and wounded four others at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin (Altman, 2012).

Depending on the flavor of white supremacy, individuals who are associated with these groups may have differing views (Mulholland, 2013). Many groups have foundations in the Nazi movement—believing there is one superior race. Among the large movements, the penultimate one is the Ku Klux Klan (KKK).

Since the November 2016 election of Donald Trump to U.S. presidency, people appear to be less reticent to shield their racist views from the public. There have been several instances in which swastikas have been tagged on buildings.

Sovereign Citizens. In 1995, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols conducted the largest domestic terror attack on United States soil, killing 168 people in Oklahoma City (Hunter & Heinke, 2011; Meyer, 2013). McVeigh and Nichols, both known to law enforcement, had tenuous connections to other domestic extremists (Bjelopera, 2013; Gruenewald, Chermak, & Freilich, 2013). Nichols, who identified as a sovereign citizen, had previously filed documents in Michigan denouncing his US citizenship (Weir, 2015).

Generally speaking, every sovereign citizen has his or her (often) unique belief, viewpoint, conspiracy theory, or philosophy (FBI Counterterrorism Analysis Section, 2011). At the movement's most basic form, however, lies the notion that "the [American] government operates outside of its jurisdiction" (FBI Counterterrorism Analysis Section, 2011, p. 21; Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.). In 2011, Southern Poverty Law Center's (SLPC) Mark Potok suggested the U.S. is home to an estimated 300,000 sovereigns, with a third of those sovereigns being "hard-core believers" (Laird, 2014, ¶13). If these numbers are even partially correct, the handful of sovereigns who have engaged in violence is insignificant in comparison to total sovereign membership.

Most sovereign theories state the existing U.S. government actually replaced the original, common law government established by the founding fathers (Crowell, 2012; FBI Counterterrorism Analysis Section, 2011). This change occurred sometime in the past; sovereigns usually believe this change occurred between the 1850s (Civil War or Emancipation) and the 1930s (Great Depression), when the U.S. went off the "gold standard" (MacNabb, 2010, ¶ 21).

Sovereign citizens often perceive their movement as not only a way to get out from under a tyrannical government, but also a way to free themselves from debt (Laird, 2014). Prevailing sovereign theories also claim that the existing U.S. government is a corporation that uses citizens as collateral for its debts (MacNabb, 2010). When a person is born, the U.S. government establishes a Department of Treasury account for the citizen. Sovereigns, in a process referred to as “freeing the strawman,” can complete a series of tasks—court filing, apostille acquiring, notary public notations—to access these U.S. Treasury funds (MacNabb, 2010).

As identified by my own research, negative or aggressive sovereign citizen interactions with law enforcement or other public officials began happening at greater frequency in 2008, following the election of President Barack Obama. As such, it is possible this movement will pacify within the next few years as a more conservative administration is in charge.

Terrorism Radicalization

Radicalization, generally speaking, is considered a process in which an actor or actor exhibits more interest into an idea, theory, or belief (Karakatsanis & Herzog, 2016). Often, this term is used to describe political activities. The negative connotation to the term is based upon the viewer’s perspective—adoption of Marxist ideals may be positive or negative radicalization (Karakatsanis & Herzog, 2016). Kajsu (2016) elaborated on this point by showcasing Albanian evolution in its democratic process. Over several years, Albanians exhibited substantial shifts toward the European Union and pro-democracy practices.

Terrorism radicalization is the process of an individual deciding to move toward terrorist ideals (Young et al., 2015). This differs from political radicalization in motivations, ideology, and causality. The motivations for terrorism radicalization typically have a perspective of victimization that turns into a personal grievance (H. F. Young, Rooze, & Holsappel, 2015). Terrorism radicalization ideology

differs because it is extreme political or religious (Chin, Gharaibeh, Woodham, & Deeb, 2016). Instead of believing abortion is wrong, a radicalized individual will believe the only way to stop it would be to kill abortion doctors.

Causality is also a key component of terrorism radicalization. Using a pseudo-meta-analytical approach, McGiloway, Ghosh, and Bhui (2015) found Muslim identification important (viz., where Muslims specifically made themselves look different than non-Muslims in order to identify more with their religion) and a negative relationship between non-Muslim association and support for terrorism. The researchers found social factors, including poverty as being drivers for radicalization, but conclude there does not appear to be a single cause for terrorism radicalization (McGiloway et al., 2015).

Researchers have created an abundance of radicalization process theories (e.g., Staircase to Terrorism [Moghaddam, 2005]; 12 Mechanisms [McCauley & Moskaleiko, 2008]; the matrix [de Wolf & Doosje, 2010]).

Staircase to Terrorism. The Staircase to Terrorism (STT; Moghaddam, 2005) consists of a ground floor and five upper floors of increased radicalization. The ground floor consists of the foundation to terrorism—the perception of fair vs. unfair. Once an individual has this established, they then move to “perceived options to fight unfair treatment” (first floor; p. 163) and escalate to “displacement of aggression” (second floor; Moghaddam, 2005, p. 164). The third floor is moral engagement toward the terrorist organization or ideals and moral disengagement toward society or the perceived enemy. It is with this stage that an individual can consider killing others as justified. Moghaddam’s (2005) fourth floor is the duality of categorical thinking solidification and terrorist organization legitimacy. This is really when the individual commits to the organization, ideals, and grievances. The fifth floor is the climax: the actual terrorist action and subsequent dénouement of responsibility (Moghaddam, 2005).

Lygre, Eid, Larsson, and Ranstorp (2011) critically evaluated Moghaddam's (2005) STT theory by conducting an extensive literature search. Of the 38 pertinent empirical articles Lygre et al. (2011) found, the researchers were able to only empirically support four of the STT's six steps. Paniagua, (2005) also took umbrage to the STT, specifically describing it as applicable to political radicalization but not to Islamic fundamentalism. Moghaddam's (2005) case study for the theory was on the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which Caschetta (2016) and others have described as fundamentally different.

12 Mechanisms. Instead of a terrorism radicalization-focused approach, McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) presented a theory of a process toward political radicalization that could serve as a pathway to terrorism. In a similar progressive model, these authors look at the process in a pyramid fashion. For each level, McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) provide supporting examples from recent terrorist actions (e.g., the Madrid Bombing; the Unabomber; Weather Underground; etc.).

Table 1. The 12 Mechanisms Pathway to Violence

Level of Radicalization	Mechanism
Individual	1. Personal victimization
	2. Political grievance
	3. Joining a radical group—the slippery slope
	4. Joining a radical group—the power of love
Group	5. Extremity shift in like-minded groups
	6. Extreme cohesion under isolation and threat
	7. Competition for the same base of support
	8. Competition with state power—condensation
Mass	9. Within groups competition
	10. Jujitsu politics
	11. Hate
	12. Martyrdom

(McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008, p. 418)

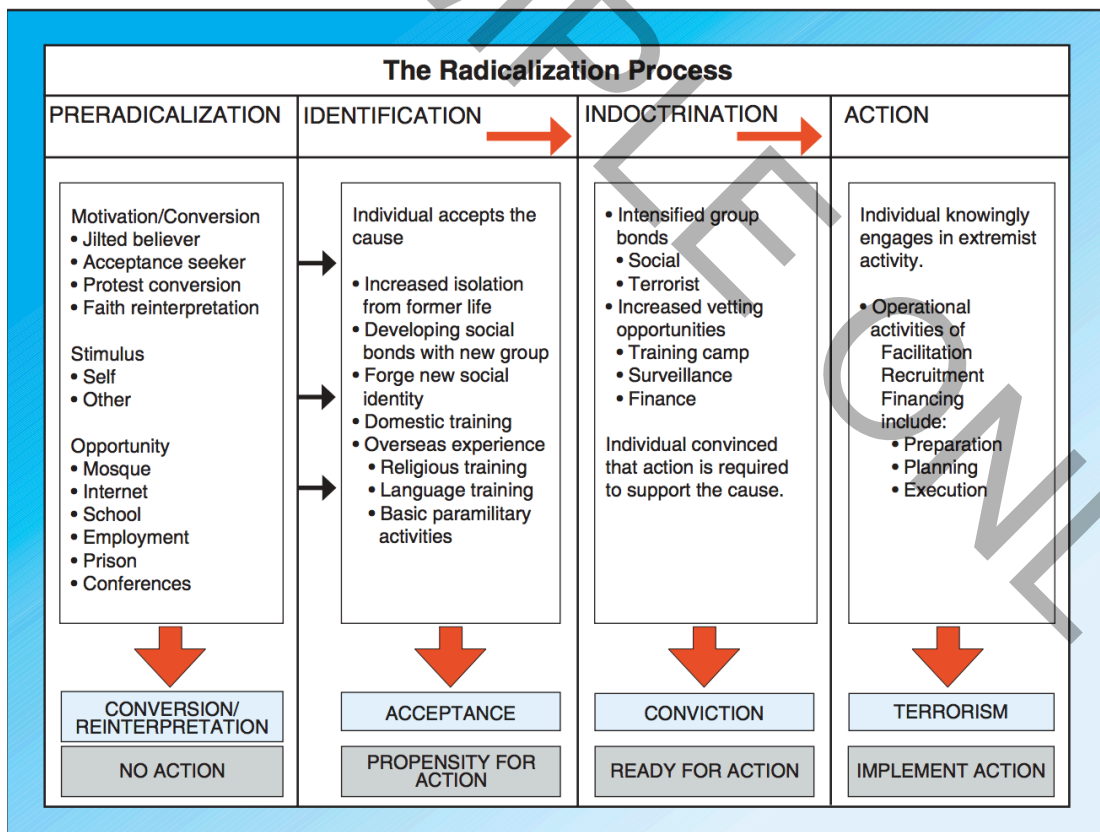
As of the writing of this assignment, I have been unable to find a critical review of the 12 Mechanisms theory. Multiple researchers have used aspects from this theory to describe the general

radicalization process (see Crone, 2016; King & Taylor, 2011; Lygre, Eid, Larsson, & Ranstorp, 2011; Tsintsadze-Maass & Maass, 2014).

The Matrix. de Wolf and Doosje (2010) based their Matrix upon Moghaddam's (2005) STT model. As illustrated in the Matrix (see Appendix A), the thought is that increased emotions can generate momentum for action (Dixon, Levine, Reicher, & Durrheim, 2012).

Radicalization Pathways. Regardless of the specific theory on radicalization, all three appear to follow a progression model with possible distinct steps. The most basic form of this pathway was illustrated in the FBI's Law Enforcement Bulletin in December 2007 (Dyer, McCoy, Rodriguez, & Van Duyn, 2007):

Figure 1. The Radicalization Process; Dyer et al., 2007, p. 6.



With this basic model, the progression starts from an individual who is not radicalized to someone who implements action. While this model is specifically focused on Islamic extremists, this progression is the possibly the model best suited for domestic terrorism actors.

Terrorism Radicalization Warning Signs

The purpose of any model is to show predictability. While Moghaddam (2005) and others have focused on theoretical frameworks describing the radicalization process, others have focused on tools law enforcement and intelligence agencies could utilize in order to identify individuals going through these phases.

TRAP-18. Meloy and Gill's (2016) Terrorism Radicalization Assessment Protocol (TRAP-18) is a model consisting of 18 behavior-based warning signs: 10 distal and 8 proximal. The distal characteristics are those which may develop over time and not necessarily translate to an immediate risk; whereas, the proximal characteristics are those which often appear closer to an act.

Table 2. TRAP-18's Proximal and Distal Behavior Characteristics

<u>Distal</u>	<u>Proximal</u>
Personal grievance and moral outrage	Pathway warning
Framed by an ideology	Behavior fixation
Failure to affiliate with an extremist group	Identification
Dependence on the virtual community	Novel aggression
Thwarting of occupational goals	Energy burst
Changes in thinking and emotion	Leakage
Failure of sexual-intimate pair bonding	Last resort
Mental disorder	Directly communicated threat
Creativity and innovation	
<u>Criminal violence by history</u>	

Source: Meloy and Gill (2016)

In support of this theory, the researchers applied the TRAP-18 to 111 lone-actor terrorists (Meloy & Gill, 2016). As applied, the researchers found 70% of these 111 terrorists exhibited at least half of the TRAP-18 characteristics; all 111 exhibited the “framed by an ideology.” Similarly, Bockler,

Hoffmann, and Zick (2015) found the individual who conducted the 2011 Frankfurt, Germany, Airport attack against American soldiers exhibited nine distal and six proximal signs. In that case study, the researchers found TRAP-18 to have over 80% accuracy in fitting what is known about the attacker.

As of this assignment, the TRAP-18 appears to be considered rather inclusive and descriptive of radicalization indicators. Currently, I am conducting research on TRAP-18 as applied to the sovereign citizen domestic terrorists. While the research is not yet finished, the results to date appear to indicate TRAP-18 is useful as a tool, but is unable to fully predict as intended. As Meloy and Gill (2016) caveat, TRAP-18 is to serve as a tool to help understand terrorist radicalization, but not necessarily an appropriate screening mechanism.

Identifying Vulnerable People. The Identifying Vulnerable People (IVP; Cole, Alison, Cole, Alison, & Weyers, 2014) guidance was developed for public sector officials (e.g., teachers; police officers) in order to screen for potential extremism. Developed by using open source material on British Muslims convicted of terrorism offenses, the checklist progresses from vague to specific in its design.

Egan et al. (2016) examined the IVP against a sample of 182 named persons who had committed violent extremism acts and open source intelligence (OSINT) was available. Included in the sample were 90 (49.2%) primarily U.K.-based persons arrested

Table 3. Identifying Vulnerable People Risk Indicators

<u>Question Type</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Examples</u>
Passive factors	Cultural and/or religious isolation	low tolerance of / isolation from outside groups
	Isolation from family	isolation from protective family influence
	Prior risk taking behavior	may repent motivated by guilt to be extra observant
	Sudden change in religious practice	sudden adherence or apparent loss of faith
	Violent rhetoric	extensive engagement with violent rhetoric and media
Active factors	Negative peer influences	gang like behavior tied to criminality or hate linked violence
	Isolated peer group	gathering with like minded individuals
	Hate rhetoric	creates disgust, fear and anger, and dehumanizes target group
	Political activism	active participation, activism towards extremist messages
	Basic paramilitary training	paintball, martial arts, team building exercises
Killing enabled factors	Travel and/or residence abroad	conflict zones, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen
	Death rhetoric	justifying violent behavior and glorification of martyrdom
	Membership in an extremist group	joining extremist groups and networks
	Contact with known recruiters and/or extremists	increased contact = increased risk
	Advanced paramilitary training	weapons training, bomb/IED making skills
	Overseas combat	fighting in Afghanistan, Somalia, Yemen

Source: Cole, Alison, Cole, Alison, and Weyers (2014)

for Islam-inspired terrorist offenses; 20 (10.9%) animal rights activists; 33 (18.0%) UK-based school shooters; 17 far-right activists (9.3%); 18 Irish Republican Army activists (9.8%); and, 4 (2.2%) violent Sikh militants (Egan et al., 2016). The researchers found interrater reliability was significant for all factors, but this ease of understanding and scoring did not translate into predictability. The tool was not successful predicting violent extremism across the sample, but did appear to have greater predictability for more contemporary offenders.

Communicated Threat Assessment Database

Many federal agencies have developed processes for documenting threats. For example, the FBI uses the Communicated Threat Assessment Database (CTAD) to document its threats (Fitzgerald, 2007). The U.S. Capitol Police, the law enforcement agency responsible for protecting all of Congress, has a Threat Assessment Section (TAS) with its own process (Scalora & Zimmerman, 2015).

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Appendix A. The Matrix

Social psychological factors	Signals	Deradicalization programs should	Key figures
Ground floor			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration because of relative deprivation and discrimination • Uncertainty • Openness to close others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is potentially open to explaining ideology • Searching for positive social identity • Influenced by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support reduced feelings of deprivation • Stimulate social creativity • Create contact with people who can provide positive influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities, media, government, schools • Municipalities, government, mosque • Municipalities, government schools
First floor			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hope for improvement versus frustration in case of failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losing faith in justice of 'the system' • Loosing belief in effectiveness old groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take away feelings of a 'glass ceiling' • Stimulate the effectiveness of the own group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities, media, government, schools
Second floor			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search face-to-face and via Internet • 'Commitment' to the group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of radical ideology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present other groups with clear ideology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipality, mosque
Third floor			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty about status within the group • Stronger belief in the group through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reciprocity principle • Cognitive dissonance • Justify efforts • Depersonalization • Polarization • Learning through role models • Foot-in-the-door principle • Use of power 	<p>New member begins to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolate himself from former environment • Dress and behave like prototypical members of the group • Rebelling against other groups particularly those very similar to the own group • Adopt another name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of isolation • Point out costs of group membership • Present alternative groups • Provide information on the power of the group over the individual • Signaling and pass on of signals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant others and acquaintances • Schools • Municipality, government, mosque, clubs, employ • Schools

Table 2 (continued)

Social psychological factors	Signals	Deradicalization programs should	Key figures
Fourth floor			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More commitment to the group through: • Fusion of personal and social identity • Increase of power of the group • Change in self-image because of functional role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members become less noticeable as a result of their increasing participation in a shadow world • Prepare an attack • Members start dressing and behaving in a more western fashion again • Express hate against ‘unbelievers’ • Teach new members the ‘true doctrine’ • Produce legacy • Resocialize by instilling fear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signaling and pass on signals • Take care that ‘detectors’ know where they can go to • Questioning violence as a means 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers, community workers, youth workers, youth care institutions, police officers, guards, neighbors, parents, and close others • Infiltrators
Fifth floor			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to an attack • Avoid inhibitory mechanisms through: • Moral exclusion by dehumanization • Apocalyptic thinking • Belief in a just world • Decrease of own responsibility by compliant state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a (video) testament • Withdraw all money from the bank • Expression of moral exclusion of other groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signaling and pass on signals • Point out irrational character of used justifications • Openly acclaim doubters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infiltrators • Infiltrators • Infiltrators

(de Wolf & Doosje, 2010)