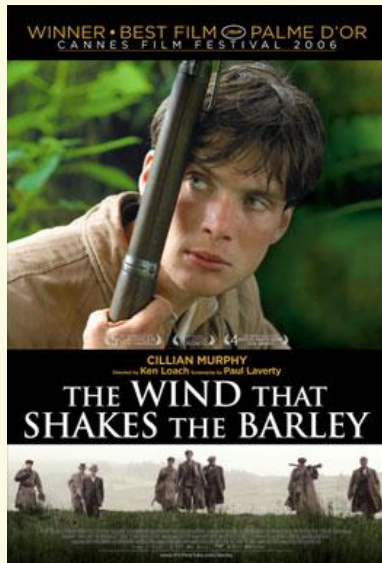


Political Theories

A key element in almost every definition of terrorism is the use of violence to influence policies & actions of the state. As Chairman Mao Zedong said, “All political power grows out the barrel of a gun.”



Political theories of terrorism emphasize the role of the **state** and its institutions in either oppressing **powerless groups** or enabling those disaffected challengers to seek redress of their grievances.

Social movements are outsiders who demand a voice in the affairs of the **polity**. If the state views them as threats to its power, its efforts to suppress challengers may push some towards terrorism.

Do states unintentionally create terror orgs by giving marginal groups no hope of working through conventional political channels?

Can a human security theory explain many instances of terrorism?

What are that theory's implications for counterterrorism efforts?

Social Movements Seek Change

Social Movement – A collective effort by relatively powerless groups using extra-institutional means to promote or resist social change (e.g., political, cultural, economic, ethnic, sexual identity)

Social Movement Organization (SMO) - Named formal organization engaged in actions to advance a social movement's goals

Movements often have several SMOs pursuing change agendas.
What differences in goals & tactics of these environmental SMOs?

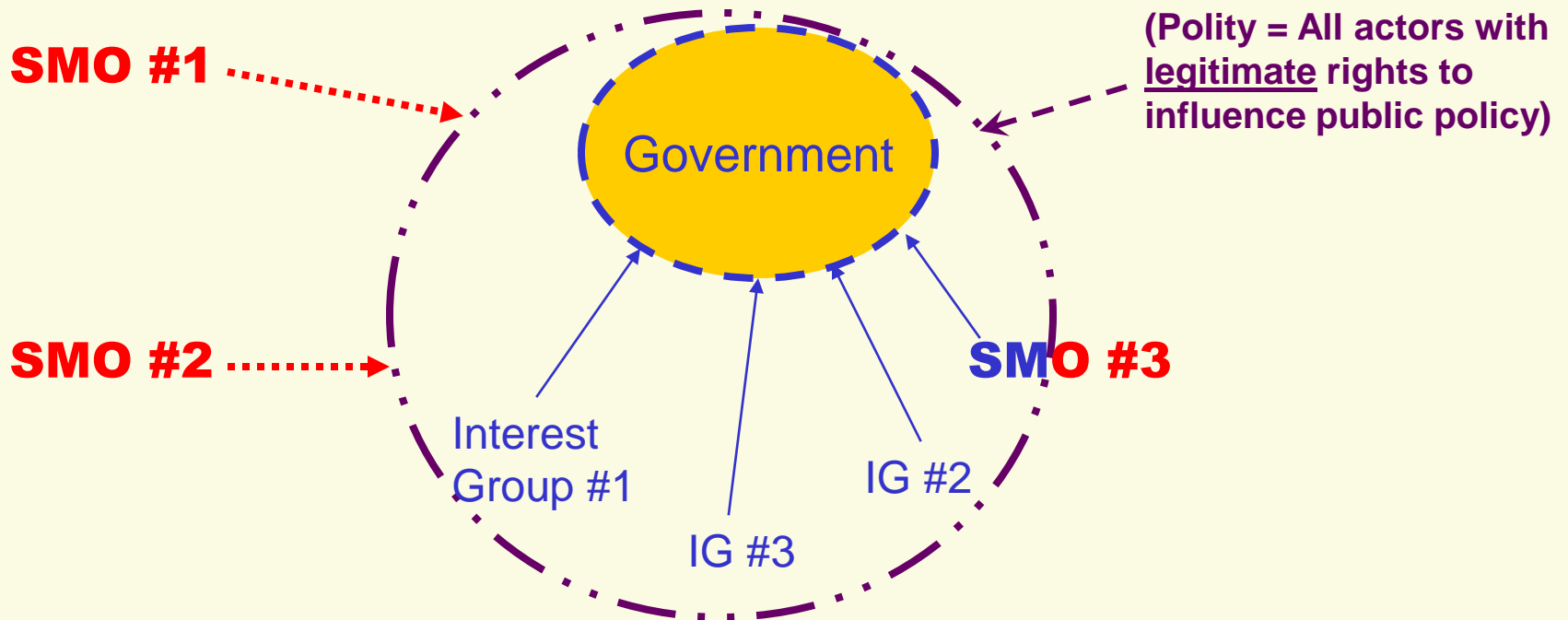
Greenpeace; Sierra Club; Audubon Society; World Wildlife Federation; Nature Conservancy; Friends of Earth; Earth Now!; **Earth Liberation Front**; ...



Over its life cycle, an SMO may change from an outside challenger to accepted political insider. William Gamson (1975) found that centralized and bureaucratized SMOs had better chances of **success** (= gaining recognition & acceptance of goals). SMOs with complex organizational structures can wage stronger & longer action campaigns.

Penetrating the Polity

When an SMO gains legitimacy, recognition, access to the polity, it transforms from outside challenger into inside interest group, now competing to influence state policies, using legitimate political actions: elections, lobbying, ...



How do terrorist groups' goals, strategies, & tactics resemble SMOs?
In what important ways do they differ from SMOs & interest groups?
Can terrorist orgs ever transform into legitimate SMOs or IGs? How?

Human Security Theory of Terrorism

Rhonda Callaway and Julie Harrelson-Stephens offered a “comprehensive, generalizable theory” about human rights conditions within states & growth of terrorist actions.

“...in the war on terrorism any idea of security can only be realized if human security is explicitly included. ... the basis for terrorism is found in deprivation of political, subsistence, and security rights, and therefore any policy designed to decrease terrorism necessarily implies addressing these rights” (p. 774).

Core propositions:

1. **Political closure** (denial of political rights, exclusion from legitimate means of participation) linearly increases terrorism
2. Violation of **personal security rights** (torture, executions, disappearances, genocide) curvilinearly increases terrorism
3. Denial of **basic subsistence rights** (food, shelter, employment) curvilinearly increases terrorism

Also influence of historical & current international power structures (brutal colonial experiences likely to produce more terrorism)

Propositions #2 and #3, specifying curvilinear relations, imply that terrorism peaks at middle-levels of violation of personal security rights & deprivation of human needs.

But, at severe levels of human rights abuses, states can suppress all opposition and snuff out their terrorists (e.g., Saddam's Iraq and Pol Pot's Cambodia).

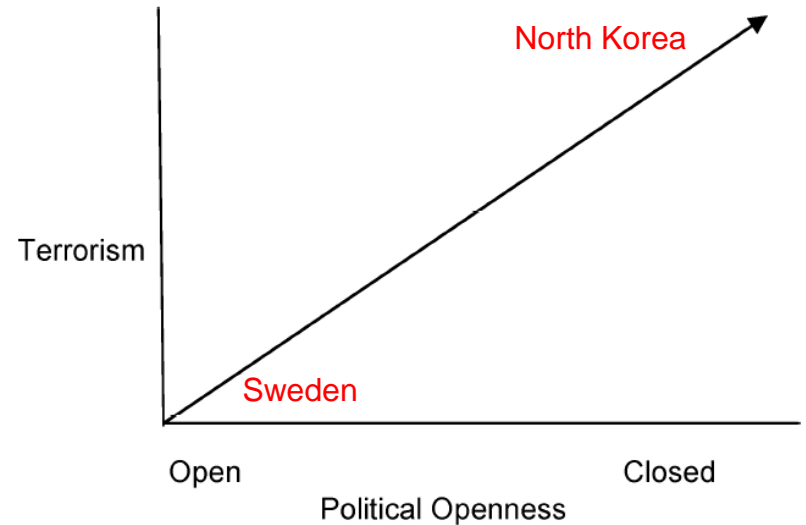


Figure 1. Relationship between political openness and terrorism.

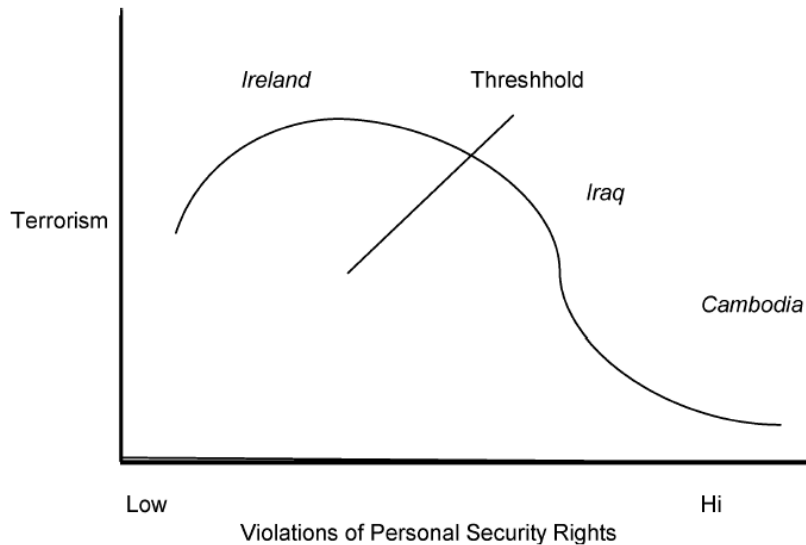


Figure 2. Relationship between personal security rights and terrorism.

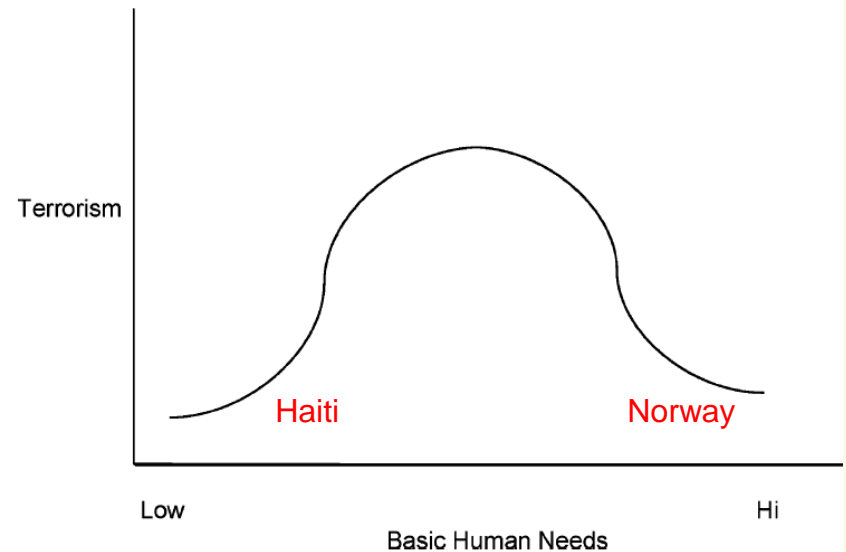


Figure 3. Relationship between basic human needs and terrorism.

Prime Breeding Ground for Terror

When moderate levels of all three human rights conditions converge inside a single state, “It is at the nexus between these three rights that the prime breeding ground for terrorist activity exists” (p. 780)

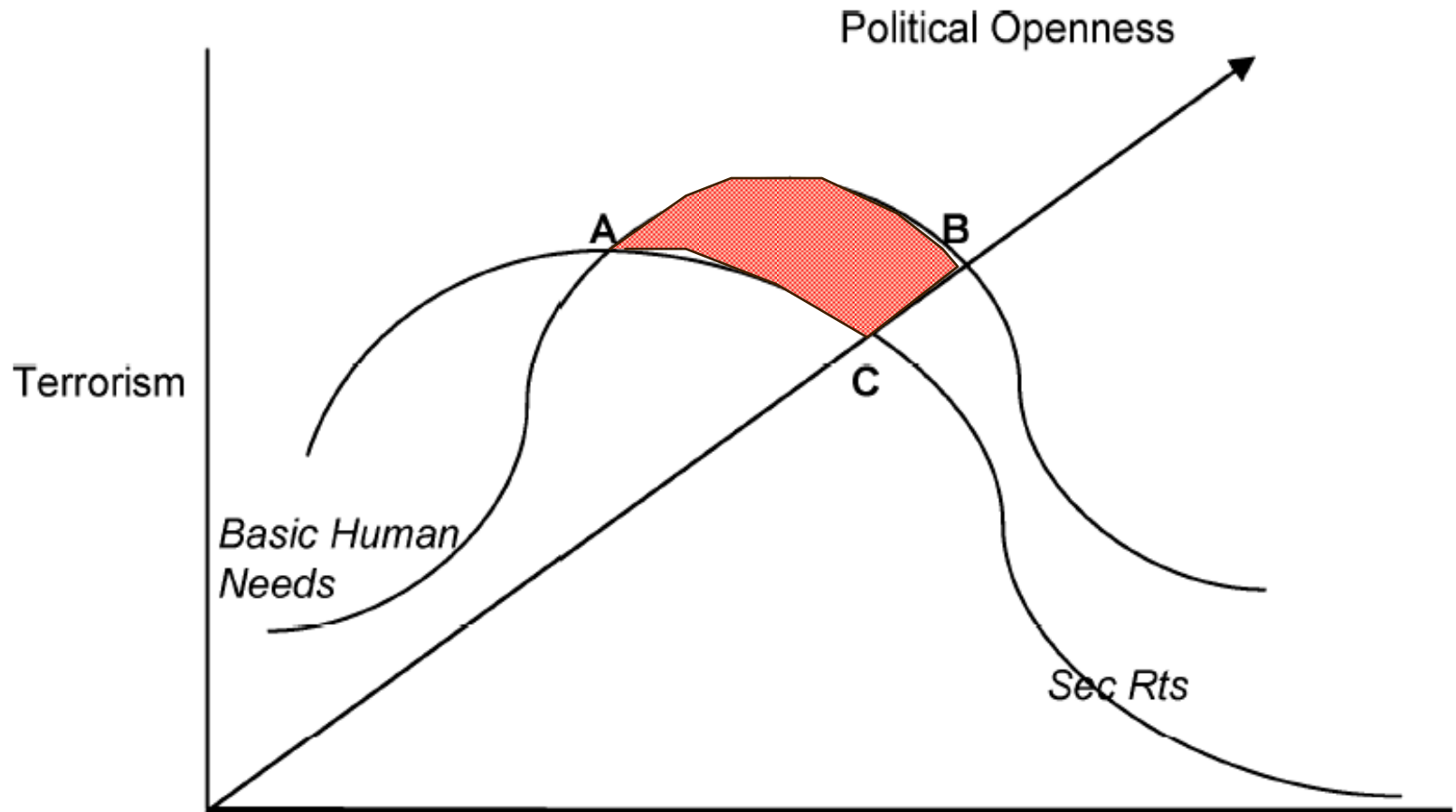


Figure 4. Terrorism and human rights.

The Case of Irish Terrorism

To “test” propositions from this generalizable theory, they examined the “Irish Question”: civil war for Ireland’s independence (1916-23) & Irish Republican Army’s terror campaign in N. Ireland (1969-2007).



- N. Ireland 1960s movement, modeled on U.S. CRM, sought Catholic minority political & economic power
- Protestant Loyalist terror, Bloody Sunday massacre
- British crack-down boosted support for IRA terrorism
- International influence: the **Irish Diaspora** in the U.S. raised funds, smuggled weapons into N. Ireland

What subsistence rights of Irish industry and employment did Brits violate?
Were Irish Catholics at middle & rising levels of economic prosperity?

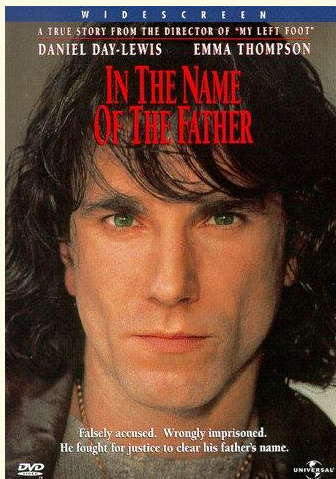
How did eroding civil & political rights fuel support for IRA terrorism?

Would a very severe British suppression of security rights have squashed the IRA completely? Why didn't the Thatcher government take this step?

What further evidence should be gathered to test the theory's propositions?

In the Name of the Father

In 1974, British police arrested Gerry Conlon and three others for the IRA bombing of a Guildford, England pub. They were convicted & sentenced to life. But the police used flimsy hearsay evidence, then tortured their prisoners to extract confessions. In 1989 the Guildford Four's convictions were overturned. Starring Daniel Day-Lewis, this film was based on Conlon's autobiography.



How closely do the British police's violations of the Guildford Four's civil rights exemplify any condition(s) required by the Human Security Theory of Terrorism?

By extracting false confessions, do the authorities risk further worsening of conditions that provoke terror?

Were similar police (and military) actions in Northern Ireland provoking an escalation of IRA terrorism?

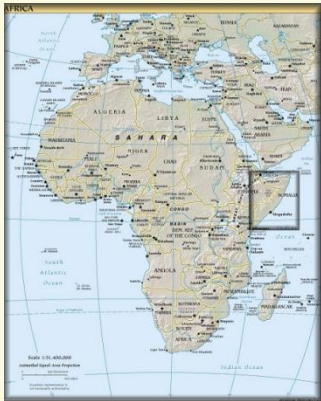
Does Britain's strong legal tradition – which eventually led to throwing out the wrongful convictions – contradict the conditions required by the theory?

Is the U.S. at increased risk of violating human rights with its recent policies of warrantless wiretaps & indefinite detention of terror suspects?

Failed States as Terror Incubators

Nations with weak / failed states may become thriving grounds for transnational terror orgs: Angola, Afghanistan, Congo, Sudan, Somalia, ...

Absence of state power & corruption open areas in which to hide, train & plan. Yet foreign governments are blocked from intervening inside those countries.



Somalia has no central gov't since 1992

U.S. aid mission failed (“Black Hawk Down”); civil wars among warlords; Ethiopian invasion & withdrawal; U.S. naval bombardments of rebels; pirates seize ships for ransom 2008; Islamist factions fighting for control; ...

Some MN Somali youths went back to fight.



James Piazza found nations high on Index of State Failure were more likely to be targets of transnational terrorists & their nationals to commit overseas terror.

Do his statistical analyses reveal a causal connection politics & terror?

What are counterterror policies are suggested by this relationship?

Should democratic nations try to break the failed state-terror link by developmental foreign aid or through military interventions?

Suicide Terrorism is Strategic

Robert Pape found 95% of 188 suicide attacks in 16 campaigns (1980-2001). Most occurred when a democratic power occupied a country with a different religion and the occupied religious community supports altruistic suicide.

Suicide terror's **strategic logic** is to put pressure on the occupying nation to withdraw; 6 of 11 campaigns achieved some significant political concessions. Israel pulled back from Gaza, West Bank; Iraqis unsuccessful in ousting U.S.



Since 1983, Hindu Tamils began using suicide bombers against Buddhist Sinhalese to create a homeland on Sri Lanka. But, the 1987-90 Indian peacekeepers, who are fellow Hindus, were not targets of suicide bombings.

A woman soldier of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam assassinated Indian P.M. Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 only after he appeared ready to send Indian troops back into S.L.

PKK Kurds launched 14 suicide attacks on Turks (1996-99), then stopped on their leader's orders. Did Kurdish Sunnis identify with Turkish Sunnis?

Why did IRA not use suicide terror in N. Ireland?

Does evidence imply suicide bombing is rational, at both the individual- and organizational-levels?



Dhanu (I.I.) approaching Rajiv Gandhi