AN EXAMINATION OF AVAILABLE LITERATURE ON THE
CRIME-TERROR NEXUS: TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
San Diego State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
in
Homeland Security

by
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Summer 2014
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

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Trends and Opportunities

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DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to my family and friends. I could not have done it without your love and support.
Let word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans.

- John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address January 20, 1961
ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

An Examination of Available Literature on the Crime-Terror Nexus: Trends and Opportunities
by
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Master of Science in Homeland Security
San Diego State University, 2014

This thesis is focused on analyzing the current research on the crime-terror nexus in order to better understand where the differing opinions and resulting conclusions that plague the topic are derived from, identify research trends, potential misconceptions, and opportunities for future research that may present a more complete picture of the nexus to policy makers and law enforcement officials. In order to accomplish this, a total of fifty-one works were analyzed. Initially these documents were divided and analyzed based on the source of publication (a complete list can be found in Appendix A). These works were then analyzed based on their dates of publication (a complete list can be found in Appendix B). Finally, the works were looked at comprehensively to identify similarities and differences that spanned the works as a whole.

When the works were examined based on these criteria, several distinct patterns emerged. Government and military publications all agreed that the crime-terror nexus existed and posed a threat to national security and no contradicting arguments were presented, whereas media and journal articles were divided on both of these issues. The media publications examined contained a plethora of events and opinions surrounding the crime-terror nexus, many of which were completely omitted from the other publications. Only military documents focused on the potential means law enforcement could exploit the nexus. In addition, the date of publication had a drastic impact on the material and conclusions of the works in question. In earlier works, the notion of a crime-terror nexus was just beginning to be explored and the transition of evidence presented either in support or opposition changed as time progressed, affecting the author’s opinion.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis committee members Dr. Paul Kaplan, Dr. Cathy Atkins, and my thesis chair Dr. Cezar Ornatowski, for their guidance and support, not only in relationship to this thesis, but including my development as a student, researcher, and individual. I would also like to thank my family and friends who have been a constant source of support and motivation.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Newton’s third law of physics states that for every action, there is an equal but opposite reaction. The same principle can be applied to the apparent dynamic between law enforcement and the terrorist organizations that have and likely will continue to attack the United States, its citizens, and its allies: for every step taken by law enforcement to prevent future attacks and hinder terrorist efforts, the terrorist organization adapts and creates new pathways of doing so. If either law enforcement or the terrorist organizations fail to recognize the innovations in their opposition, or fail to adjust accordingly, the advantage shifts to one side and the other is left increasingly vulnerable.

In regards to an organization’s ability to adapt quickly to the actions of its counterpart, terrorist organizations have the advantage. T.M. Sanderson, in his article “Transnational Terror and Organized Crime: Blurring the Lines”, states, “generally speaking, terrorist and organized crime groups are more responsive and agile than the governments and multilateral organizations which pursue them. Rapid re-calibrations of law enforcement are vital if anti-terror, anti-crime efforts are to succeed” (55). Law enforcement, whether in the form of government, military, or federal, state, and local officers, must uphold certain protocols and procedures to which the American public hold them accountable. Hence, many of the major changes that have occurred in law enforcement followed catastrophic events as responses to public desires and perceptions of the role of government in protecting citizens.

One of the criminal activities that the United States has focused on is diverting financial support meant to support terrorist syndicates. The end of the Cold War essentially stopped state-sponsored terrorism in most people’s perception, forcing terrorist organizations to depend on front organizations and private individuals to fund their networks. Post September 11th, these sources were largely eradicated by the “freezing assets and blocking the financial transactions of informal banking system and financially crippling individuals, charities, and welfare organizations associating with terrorists” (Wang 11) through enforcement measures like the Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and
Obstruct Terrorism Act, better known as the PATRIOT Act. Therefore terrorist groups had to acquire revenue through other channels. As of 2003, over $123 million assets had been frozen. Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations were forced to explore other funding options (Wang) in order to survive.

With their traditional financial support challenged and the international law enforcement community’s attention focusing in on them, terrorist organizations were in a position where their options were to adapt and find new funding sources or their current operations would cease to exist. With third parties, nation states, front organizations, and private individuals all being monitored, these groups had to become monetarily self-sufficient. In order to create the type of revenue needed to maintain large organizations, terrorists looked to and in several cases worked directly with, criminal syndicates to learn how to criminally produce a profit.

Both of these types of organizations operate in sublegal, black-market worlds and therefore have similar necessities. Criminal and terrorist organizations also tend to have similar structures, are rational actors, have replaceable leadership structures, and are “highly adaptable, innovative, and resilient” (Wang 13). Criminal, profit-minded organizations hope to gain knowledge such as of attack techniques from terrorist organizations as a means to further their own criminal activities. In addition, the disruption terrorist organizations cause within societies and governments can often create situations in which organized criminals flourish. Therefore, prolonging the life of a terrorist organization and enhancing its criminal abilities is generally in the organized criminals’ best interests. The reverse is also true where ideologically based terrorist organizations hope to learn ways of acquiring wealth to fund their growing organizations from the expertise of organized criminal syndicates. This reliance on criminal techniques or outside criminal syndicates, hereafter known as the crime-terror nexus, is an emerging threat to United States and international security because it provides terrorist organizations with a means to counter law enforcements’ actions and increase their longevity. Because both terrorists and criminals are persons, this overlap of crime and terror is actually easily accomplished as individuals and organizations can be both and excel at both without separating their motivations, actions, or techniques into separate “criminal” versus “terrorist” categories. They are really a new breed of both criminals and terrorists where the term “crime-terror nexus” describes a new and significantly more
sophisticated threat to the security of the nation and its citizens. Because this nexus changes through time, the crime-terror nexus is very much a moving target growing in complex and disparate ways in different parts of the world and within different societies.

Because of the significant national security implications the crime-terror nexus has, one would think that an extensive amount of research would have been done to ensure that our policy leaders and law enforcement agencies have a thorough understanding of its intricacies in order to take swift and decisive action. Despite this apparent need, the existing literature focusing on the crime-terror nexus varies significantly in its findings on the extent the nexus helps either terrorist organizations or organized criminals, when cooperation occurs and under what circumstances, and to what ends. Noteworthy disagreement exists between authors as to whether or not these two differently minded organizations can work together to accomplish either mutually individually benefitting results. Because much of the significance of this research would fit within law enforcement or Intelligence Community settings, likely much of the critical research and observations and recommendations are not publicly available.

In much the same way, searches of the literature and understanding the often rapidly changing nature of the crime-terror nexus in specific societies (like Somalia, Philippines, or Nigeria) and their relationships with their global extensions including in the US becomes extremely difficult without understanding the dynamic nature of the term “crime-terror nexus.” This thesis uses the crime-terror nexus as an example of the complex and dynamically changing through time nature of the adversary in a Homeland Security context. Without understanding the changes in the meanings of phrases and words that are used as labels for an adversary, it is highly unlikely that appropriate law and governance decisions can be made on the basis of outdated concepts and views of criminal-terrorist collaborations. Because the speed of interactions such as via media like YouTube and commercial TV as well as the Internet via websites and magazines such as Al Qaeda’s *Inspire* magazine and even more so with social media such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, the dynamic nature of criminal and terrorist networks transcends the academic literature. By trying to compare different sources of information through time, this thesis will investigate the term “crime-terror nexus” as an example of the dynamic nature of understanding and battling these threats. Only by understanding that such words mean significantly different things
through time is it possible to appropriately read the literature, as terms such as lone-wolf terrorist or work-place violence can refer to exactly the same thing such as the Ft. Hood shooting---but government decisions and protection of the nation is dramatically different depending on the meaning of the words.

In order to ensure a complete and representative picture of available research on the crime-terror nexus, four categories of source material that have the ability to influence policy makers, military and law enforcement personnel, and public perception were analyzed: government publications, military publications, academic and professional journal articles, and media sources. In total, fifty-two works were analyzed, many of which used others in the sample as evidence to their claims. These sources were gathered between January and February of 2014 through a number of means, including several military university archives and academic journal archives. All of the material is published, publically available, and unclassified. In order to fully comprehend the variances within these works, they were analyzed based on their publication origin (government, military, academic or professional journal, or media) and then examined based on their date of publications. Once this was achieved, significant differences within the works as a whole were addressed. The publications analyzed were chosen because they come from respected and influential sources and authors, are representative of other works distributed from the sources during the time periods, and because they all make strong, unwavering arguments pertaining to the crime-terror nexus.

Additional sources were gathered by looking at the source material of previously collected publications. These works were gathered not only to expand upon the pool of research to be analyzed, but also to provide an image of the source material that is available and used by various authors in their respective fields. The amount and the divergence of the data suggest that traditional literature and media research must be done in more sophisticated ways to produce appropriate answers through time. This is true both looking at events forensically as to why something like the Arab Spring happened, but also suggesting what is likely to happen in the future, such as the linkage of Hezbollah and Mexico to interactions on the US-Mexico border.
CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS BASED ON PUBLICATION ORIGIN

The works analyzed in this thesis were separated into four categories based on their publication origin: government, military, academic or professional journals, and media sources. A complete list can be found in Appendix A.

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

A total of fourteen government publications were analyzed. These sources were compiled from several domestic agencies, international government organizations, and foreign governments. A complete list can be found in Appendix A.

The majority of literature originating from government organizations evaluated the threat posed by the crime-terror nexus, discussed potential causes of the nexus, noted where more research is needed, and often presented recommendations for policy or law enforcement actions. All fourteen documents identified that there is a growing relationship between terrorists and organized criminals, ultimately increasing revenues for terrorist groups. This presents a significant threat to international security by allowing for the continuance of terror campaigns despite government and coalition efforts. This threat is made poignantly in a paper written by Christina Schloi Liang for the Geneva Center for Security Policy in which she cites a Stanford study that found that “out of 128 conflicts studied, the 17 which relied contraband finances lasted five times longer” (4). Another phenomena addressed by a majority of works involves the reorganization of both organized criminal and terrorist networks from hierarchical to network structures, and that this reorganization was the result increased pressure from international law enforcement.

These publications identified the threat the crime-terror nexus pose either to the government composing the report or to the region being examined. The regions examined most frequently were the southwestern border of the United States and Europe. Several publications did not focus on a single geographical area, instead speaking to the threat to the international community as a whole.
Much of the concern stemming from the crime-terror nexus along the southwestern border of the United States has to do with terrorist organizations utilizing their relationship with Mexican drug cartels and drug smugglers to illegally enter the country. This threat is substantiated by a number of publications reviewed in this work. The United States House Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Management found that “only 873 miles of our 1,969 mile border with Mexico is under operational control and only 129 miles are under full control,” (51) adding that this threat is exacerbated because the Mexican government is not in a position where they can adequately control the southern side of the border. This provides terrorist organizations, when assisted by organized criminals who know how to cross the border undetected, with an opportunity to enter the United States and carry out attacks despite the extensive preventative actions by law enforcement following 9/11. The same Subcommittee discovered evidence of this occurring: terrorist organizations, including the Qods Force and Hezbollah have attempted to forge relationship with criminals that could ensure their safe passage into the U.S.

Literature discussing the crime-terror nexus in Europe focuses on a variety of issues that rose following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the criminal syndicates and terrorist groups that formed from the resulting power vacuum. A study by the European Parliament, titled *Europe’s Crime-Terror Nexus: Links between Terror and Organized Crime Groups in the European Union*, found that the region’s geographical location to areas of conflict, including the former Soviet Union, the Middle East, the Caucuses, and Northern Africa, have created a unique environment that promotes nexus relationships. The study discussed the fact that immigrants from these areas move into countries in the European Union and in turn “create additional links between diaspora communities and ‘home jurisdictions’ that facilitate the introduction of new illicit networks and opportunities for linkage between OC and terrorism to emerge” (15).

The findings of this work are mirrored in a paper written by Glenn Curtis and Tara Karacan published by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress, titled *Nexus Among Terrorists, Narcotics Traffickers, Weapons Proliferators, and Organized Crime Networks in Western Europe*. This paper noted that a number organized criminal groups formed “after the break down of the central law enforcement system” (5) following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and because the law enforcement functions in the region “has
remained fragmented and corrupt,” (5) allowing these criminals to solidify their organizations and develop illicit networks. Both government publications note that the combination of established organized criminal networks and the absence of a strong central law enforcement body is attractive to terrorists looking to expand to the region or seek alignment with a criminal group.

The government publications examined that addressed the potential causes for the nexus were in agreement that the modern crime-terror nexus is a result of forced adaptations by terrorist organizations in response to increased pressure from law enforcement and government organizations, forcing terrorists to look for alternate forms of funding, and international expansion options made possible through globalization and the advent of the Internet. This sentiment is reflected by Christina Scholri Liang in her paper *Shadow Networks: The Growing Nexus of Terrorism and Organized Crime*, “the growing nexus of shared tactics and methods of terror and crime groups is due to four major developments: globalization, the communication revolution through the internet, the end of the Cold War, and the global ‘war on terror’” (1).

Another point of agreement was a call for more research on the relationships between illicit actors participating in the crime-terror nexus and on the threat that each of these relationship pose to international security. One of the most vocal publications was compiled the Expert Working Group (EWG) on International Organized Crime, which was “largely disappointed with the research examining the links between IOC and terrorism” (Picarelli 9). The EGW specified what fields they believed deserved further study, noting that in order for policy makers to act appropriately, more information is needed on “detailing and cataloguing the relationships between organized criminals and terrorists,” (9) how and where these connections are formed and how do they evolve, and that a working definition for both organized crime and terrorism is needed to ensure that the potential for misidentification is lessened.

Another similarity between all fourteen government publications was that they all focused on addressing certain policy and law enforcement changes that are needed to combat the emerging threats from the crime-terror nexus. These works mentioned both proposed measures the authors believed would be beneficial and existing legislation that has already been established to counter the nexus.
One common recommendation was to increase international cooperation as a mean of circumventing the global reach of these networks. One work by the United States, Office of the President of the United States, *Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime: Addressing Converging Threats to National Security*, stated that in order to stem the threat posed by the crime-terror nexus, as well as organized crime and terror groups behaving as individual actors, it is necessary to “build international consensus, multilateral cooperation, and public-private partnerships” (9). Another study conducted by the European Parliament, *Europe’s Crime-Terror Nexus: Links between Terror and Organized Criminal Groups in the European Union*, suggested that international cooperation should mirror developments that occur on the national level “a joint-task force should be established at both notional and E.U. level, which can exert leverage over the convergence of crime and terrorist groups by continuously monitoring new developments and trends, and sharing these with member-states” (12). These findings are mirrored in Europol’s *European Union Crime Threat Assessment, 2007*, which stated that success in countering the threat posed by the nexus, “regional initiatives, devised and executed at the local, national, and international level in a co-ordinated manner” (28) will be necessary.

Another point of policy agreement was that in order to properly combat the growing nexus, there must be an international effort to stem corruption. This point is stated by David Luna, the Director for Anticrime Programs of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, in a 2008 speech

we can more effectively employ our capabilities and resources -diplomatic, informational/intelligence, military, economic- to combat not only the battle against drug cartel and transnational organized crime, but the manner in which we exploit and target the web of corruption and criminality in our strategies in the long war against terrorism.

Several works discussed the steps, both policy and law enforcement based, that have already been taken to counter the threats posed by the nexus. An example of an international based law enforcement effort is the Threat Focus Cells established by the FBI. These cells “target Eurasian organized crime,” a region identified by several of the works as being conducive to increased nexus-related activity (Mueller). These Cells, of which there are two in existence as of January 2011, take a multifaceted approach to the nexus, employing individuals from several specialties, including cybercrime, intelligence, and criminal proceeding as well as work with law enforcement entities from the host nation.
When reviewing the compiled government publications as a whole, it is important to understand the perspective of the different authors, the purposes behind these texts, and the biases they may hold. One interesting fact was that all of these documents not only found evidence to support that a crime-terror nexus existed, but found that the crime-terror nexus constituted a threat to national security, a belief that was not found in all of the works from other origins. This may be because it is in the governments’ interest to classify the nexus as a threat in order to appear proactive on a subject the American people want action to resolve. This may also be the same reason all of the works addressed potential or existing policy or law enforcement action.

Where disagreements occurred in these publications, they were not overt and instead were differences in what was discussed in each publication. One reason for this may be that the majority of sources used for these works were previous government publications on the same range of topics; organized crime, terrorism, and the potential relationship between the two. This lack of source variety has the potential to influence various opinions about the crime-terror nexus and does not allow for outside opinions. A possible negative result of this single-sided approach is that those that may not hold the same preconceptions and interests as individuals working for a government agency to be addressed on a national level what about them? This sentence seems unfinished. To ensure that a more complete representation of the current situation pertaining to the crime-terror nexus reaches policy makers and law enforcement personnel, it is vital that government publications include ideas from a variety of sources.

**MILITARY PUBLICATIONS**

A total of eight military publications were compiled for this thesis. The majority of these documents were published by various military universities, including West Point and the National Defense University, with a single document published by the Department of Defense Joint Chiefs of Staff. A complete list may be found in Appendix A.

From these military publications, several trends emerge. Aspects pertaining to the crime-terror nexus that are repeatedly discussed include the evaluation of the threat posed, the “terrorization” of crime and the “criminalization” of terror, steps that can be taken to
exploit the nexus, the role of corruption and poor governance, greed as motivation, policy implications, and calls for continued research.

The military publications, like the previously examined government publications, agreed that the crime-terror nexus posed a significant threat to national and global security. However, unlike their government counterparts, these authors noted that this belief is not universal and suggested that there were several outspoken individuals voicing the opposite opinions.

One work that addressed opposing opinions was “The Nexus of Extremism and Trafficking: Scourge of the World or so Much Hype?”, written by Russell D. Howard and Colleen Traughber for the Joint Special Operations University. In this work, the authors provide several examples of individuals who disagree that the crime-terror nexus constitutes a significant threat and various reasons behind this thought process. One such individual was Dr. Jeffery M. Bale, a professor at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. Bale believed that the nexus has been used by military and policy leaders as a way to justify increased defense spending and the implementation of strict policies. Bales does not disagree that cooperation has occurred between these organized criminals and terrorists, but states that this collaboration is natural and unavoidable when the two organizations operate in the same, sub-legal worlds. Others not cited by name or work in the publication believe that the different motivations between criminals (profit) and terrorist (ideology) prevent them from working together. Another argument mirroring this sentiment is that the existence of a nexus is proof of the effectiveness of past legislation and law enforcement action and is in fact a sign of weakness within terrorist organizations.

Russell D. Howard and Colleen Traughber countered such arguments by noting various government studies that have found close relationships between criminal groups and terrorist organizations and by citing individuals who very strongly believe that these relationships are threatening in nature. One Department of Justice study found that “29 of 63 different illicit organizations demonstrated collaboration or other close relationships with terrorist groups” (Howard and Traughber 4). In addition, the authors discussed the concerns of General James L. Jones, former U.S. National Security Advisor, who saw the cooperation indicative of the nexus as “a significant security threat- one that could involve the transfer of
weapons of mass destruction (WMD) material to terrorists, or present opportunities for terrorists to enter the United States via human trafficking networks” (4).

One point several military publications addressed was the “criminalization” of terrorism and the subsequent “terrorization” of crime and the effect this was having on law enforcement and military personnel’s ability to adequately patrol and respond to them. One such work, “Convergence: Special Operations Forces and Civilian Law Enforcement” by John B. Alexander, stated that our military members are having to adopt various police procedures, such as writing and providing warrants and the collection of evidence in preparation for potential legal proceedings, and that local law enforcement officers are experiencing increasingly violent situations outside of their training as a direct result of the crime-terror nexus. Unfortunately for our military personnel, they are not being trained to perform these law enforcement functions, and instead must learn through trial and error when in a dangerous and potentially contentious environment. While law enforcement officers have the ability to call in specially trained units, most often Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) units, they still are increasingly put into hazardous situations without being trained on how to properly address these “terrorized” criminals.

The majority of the argument Alexander presented for military personnel acting more in a law enforcement function than their training supports came from personal interviews he had conducted. To support his finding that law enforcement are increasingly being put in situations that more resemble what is expected of coalition forces, Alexander provided several examples. One of these examples was of a bank robbery that occurred in North Hollywood, California on February 28, 1997. The gunman, Larry Eugene Phillips and Emil Matasareanu, were armed with metal plated full body armor, three AK-47 copies, an “illegally modified AR-15 fitted with a drum magazine that held 100 rounds,” (8) several handguns, and over 3,000 rounds of ammunition. The resulting 45-minute confrontation ended only when one of the suspects, Phillips, died of a self-inflicted gunshot and Matasareanu was wounded by officers. In all, over three hundred officers from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), LAPD SWAT, and several other agencies responded to these two highly armed perpetrators. This depicted on a national scale that in severe cases, the weapons our officials are issued may not be sufficient at countering the weapons they
encounter while on duty, and resulted in police departments around the country increasing their firepower.

Another work that addresses the changing nature of the threat our military is experiencing as a result of the crime-terror nexus is *Operationalizing COIN* by Joseph D. Celeski. Celeski notes that “modern insurgents can increase their chances of success in a newer form asymmetry when they cooperate and network with terrorists and transnational criminals” (26) and that modern COIN (counterinsurgency) theories need to address all of these factors at once in order to be most effective. Both the instances of military and law enforcement personnel being put into position where they must act outside of their training to adequately counter an immediate threat is evidence of the evolution of the nexus and its direct consequences.

An additional aspect of the military publication focused on the crime-terror nexus examined for this thesis that was not present in government publications on the same topic were the opportunities the nexus presented law enforcement, government, and military entities to put additional pressures on both criminal and terrorist entities.

One suggested opportunity was to influence the mindsets of the characters within the nexus: the criminals and terrorists currently benefiting, and individuals surrounding nexus activity, namely the local populations. Joseph B. Celeski made the recommendation as part of his modernized COIN models to “create doubt and divisions between different factions of the insurgents through an adept and shrewd PSYOP (psychological operation) and subversion effort” (33). This opportunity is founded in the fact that illegal entities need public and internal support in order to properly function. This support can either be a result of intimidation, loyalty, or ideology, and both terrorist and criminal organizations enjoy a combination of all three in the areas they operate. A psychological operation, like the one Celeski is proposing, has the ability to target and dismantle the basis of support these organizations need in order to function, and that deterioration would have severely negative consequences on both actors. In addition, Howard and Traughber noted that by publically declaring that terrorists are engaged in illegal activity for profit, that they are in fact criminals and not solely idealistic actors, to the public will provide a counter to their ideological motives, which “inhibits their opportunity to raise funds and recruit” (43). Gretchen Peters, in her paper *Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan*, discussed
how the violence and relationship to organized criminals in the region has already made portions of the population doubt the true motivations behind terrorist groups in the region and have begun to renounce their support.

Howard and Traughber discussed several other opportunities the nexus presents United States forces. These opportunities include that the ability of law enforcement to track terrorists based on their criminal activity is simpler than tracking them for their terrorist related activities, criminal resources are already in existence to counter the illicit acts that are indicative of nexus activity (legal structures, court systems), criminal activity is easier to prosecute that terrorist activity, and that the possibility to “employ undercover operators to actively penetrate trafficking organizations known to be linked to terrorist entities” (43) is much more likely. All of the above mentioned cases constitute an opportunity to fight both crime and terror that would not exist without the crime-terror nexus.

The final trend difference between the previously discussed government publications and the military works reviewed is that the government publications failed to mention the potential shift in motivation of terrorist networks engaged in the nexus from strictly ideological to one influenced by greed and profits. One of the authors that was particularly outspoken about the changing motivations of these groups was Gretchen Peters, who detailed these thoughts in two separate works, *Haqqani Network Financing: The Evolution of an Industry* and *Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan*.

In this work, Peters details the financial capacity and fundraising capabilities the Haqqani Network, a “semi-autonomous component of the Taliban,” (i) has developed. In this work, Peters describes the Network as a political-criminal hybrid where “leaders appear to be as motivated by profitmaking as they are driven by issues like revenge, honor and ideology” (2). She stated that it is rational for those who profit from a conflict, like criminals organizations, to work against a resolution, and that this activity can be seen in the Haqqani Network and other ideological groups’ activity. In *Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan*, Peters discussed that this drive for profit has led to a change in how the organization conducts its business practices, noting that it “now focuses less on taxing poppy farmers, having turned its attention to the more profitable processing and exporting end of the business” (ii) in an attempt to seek higher profits. This “for-profit” mindset is another potential driving point of the crime-terror nexus.
One point of agreement between the military and government publications examined is that both agree that corruption both fuels the crime-terror nexus and will be a significant hurdle if it is to ever be eradicated. The sentiment that a corrupt government is a weak government, one that is unable to properly rule its territory and protect its citizens from crime and terror, is made by Lt. Col. Jennifer Hesterman of the United States Air Force in her work “Transnational Crime and the Criminal-Terrorist Nexus: Synergies and Corporate Trends”. Hesterman does, however, make several recommendations on how international efforts can take steps to alleviate the corrupt governments that provide safe havens for illicit actors. She suggested that the Council of Europe’s Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO), of which the United States is a member, has the ability to “establish and enforce rule of law,” (vii) and the establishment of similar regional bodies can have a strong effect on corruption.

Additionally, both government and military publications discussed the policy implications posed by the formation and evolution of the crime-terror nexus and the need for international law enforcement and government-based cooperation. Hesterman, in addition to discussing the expansion of GRECO to additional regions, also discussed the role of the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), a U.S. Department of State program. One political body that has the potential to impact the global reach of the nexus is the Lyon Group, which is chaired by the INL. The Lyon Group establishes “international standards” and is engaged in “enhancing law enforcement cooperation against transnational crime and terrorism, including identifying and removing obstacles to cooperation and facilitating information sharing” (Hesterman 19).

Adding to Hesterman’s point is a summary written by the National Defense University, “FINAL REPORT: Trans - Atlantic Dialogue on Combating Crime - Terror Pipelines; Dismantling Converging Threat Networks to Strengthen Global Security”, on an international conference with the same title. The participants in the conference, who totaled more than 150, called for “above all... a need for greater collective action to combat converging threat networks” (2). The conference also highlighted that several U.S. policies already in place have the potential to greatly impact the nexus and that they should be used accordingly. One of these pieces of legislation is the PATRIOT Act, a tool designed shortly after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 to ensure that terrorism was addressed appropriately and with adequate legal statutes.
In review, similarly to the government documents, the purpose behind the publication of these works needs to be examined. Much as government organizations have little use in not identifying the crime-terror nexus as a threat, military institutions only have support, in public opinion and funding, to gain by stating that there is a threat against our nation. Additionally, both equally benefit from calling for increased cooperation as an important step to undermining this illicit activity. However, the differences in topics discussed in the works between these two interlaced institutions need to be further investigated.

One difference is that unlike the government publications, only one of the military documents examined focused on a single geographical area (tribal areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan). Many alluded to the importance of the Middle East as a hotbed for nexus-related activity because of its established terror networks and the inability of several of the nations in the region to adequately control and monitor the actions of those within their territory. Government-originated publications tended to be more geographically specific, but not a single document focused on the Middle East; instead, they addressed specifically events and conditions in Europe and at the Southwestern Border of the United States. This could be because these institutions were focusing on the areas they are most involved with: the military on the Middle East, a region of conflict for over a decade, and the Government on our citizens and our allies’ citizens. Regardless of reason, the fact that two nationally based sources of information, most of them originating from American authors, emphasized such different geographical areas presents the possibility that the policy makers depending on these sources for information, may be presented with entirely different stances on the same overarching topic and national security threat.

Another area of stark contrast is that none of the government publications referenced how crime and terror are dealt with as individual entities. This point is made by Howard and Traughber, who state that “legally, terrorism is handled as a national security issue, while drug trafficking is not...” (39). The fact that this was not addressed in other government publications, all focused on solving a problem of convergence, highlights a gap in available information, research, and understanding pertaining to the nexus.
A total of sixteen academic and professional journal articles were examined for this thesis. These works were compiled from a variety of universities and international and domestic journals. A complete list of works, authors, and sources can be found in Appendix A.

Unlike the previously examined sources, government and military, the authors of the journal articles studied do not have similar priorities in what their work accomplishes or what stance it takes. With government- and military-originated works, all of the authors have similar stances and backgrounds, and their publications reflect this in that there were very few differences between them. Within the array of purposes and independent organizations represented in the sixteen journal articles, stark differences are seen.

One point of agreement is that terrorist syndicates and organized crime groups have several structural similarities. One similarity was that both sets of organizations have adopted a network-based structure, usually in response to increased efforts by law enforcement. This stance is taken by Louise A. Shelley and John T. Picarelli in “Methods not Motives: Implications of the Convergence of International Organized Crime and Terrorism”. These authors group organized criminals and terrorists as transnational crime groups, and such organizations tend to have a network-based structure to ensure the secrecy of the entity. Shelley and Picarelli further illustrate this by stating, “The cells give organizational flexibility, reduce the possibility of law enforcement penetration, and provide greater efficiency” (307). This sentiment is mirrored by Chris Dishman in “The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge”. Dishman states that not only are the network structures of these organizations similar, but they increasingly make it more difficult for law enforcement officials to track and deter these forms of crime as well as facilitate nexus interactions and cooperation. The autonomous nature of each cell, states Dishman, forces low-level operatives to self-finance, and without having a strong central leader to answer to they may look to criminal actions and organizations as a means of acquiring the resources they need. Additionally, the authors of “Evil Twins: The Crime-Terror Nexus,” Frank Perri, Terrance Lichtenwald, and Paula MacKenzie, stated that the network structures both criminal and terrorist groups have adopted allow for rapid adjustments reallocation of resources,
funds, and individuals, also facilitate these organizations adjusting to work with one another when it is needed.

In addition to having similar operational structures, many authors examined agree that criminals and terrorists operate in the same sub-legal realms and that specific environments can promote the flourishing of criminal activity that leads to nexus-related behavior. One of the environments most commonly associated with the crime-terror nexus is that of weak governance: either a failed state or a government that has lost functional control of its geographical area and its inhabitants. In “The Failed State - Organized Crime - Terrorism Nexus,” Wibke Hansen noted that while a failed state alone is not enough to support illicit criminal and terrorist activity, there is a strong association between these governments and the crime-terror nexus, “state failure correlates with the presence of terrorist and organized criminal groups” (1). Robert Killebrew, in “Crime and Terrorism”, took a similar stance when he stated that in order to effectively police and suppress the growing nexus, American forces must “help our allies rebuild local security forces, police, courts and legal systems” (3). In this statement, Killebrew identified an environment that fosters criminal activity and that nexus actors are attracted to and thrive in. Svante E. Cornell, in “The Narcotics Threat in Greater Central Asia: From Crime-Terror Nexus to State Infiltration?” suggests that nexus activity is indicative of serious corruption problems within weaker nations, such as Afghanistan and Tajikistan; “criminal organizations and terrorists use corruption to breach the sovereignty of many states and then continue to employ it to distort domestic and international affairs” (41). Despite the differences in opinion surrounding the crime-terror nexus, the majority of authors believe that there are similarities in how crime and terrorist groups function and where they choose to establish themselves, and that these similarities present opportunities for cooperation between crime and terror syndicates.

Another point of agreement among academic and professional journal articles is that the nature of the nexus is dynamic and that relationships that comprise it can take several forms. One of the most cited works dealing with this issue is “The Crime - Terror Continuum: Tracing the Interplay between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism,” by Tamara Makarenko. Makarenko state that there is a spectrum related to the interactions between terrorists and criminals participating in the nexus. This spectrum includes stages of cooperation between actors, beginning with alliance and ending with what Makarenko
describes as the “black hole syndrome,” which is the total convergence of a criminal and terrorist groups into a single hybrid organization.

Similarly to Makarenko, Luis de la Cortez Ibanez, in "To What Extent do Global Terrorism and Organized Criminality Converge? General Parameters and Critical Scenarios," points out that the crime-terror nexus can take several forms, depending on the relationship between the criminal and terrorist organization. These forms include confluence (when a criminal or terrorist group adopts practices generally associated with the other), hybrid blending or transformation (when crime and terror groups either converge into a single entity or adopt the motivations of the other), and cooperation (when the two organizations work together to accomplish their individuals motivations). Additionally, in "The Crime-Terror Nexus: Transformation, Alliance, Convergence," Peng Wang suggested that the nexus’s most common form is “straightforward use of crime by terrorist groups as a source of funding,” (12) but that in order to survive some terrorist organizations had to “transform their organization into transnational criminal organizations with ‘profit-minded agencies’ in order to effectively seek their political ends.”

The most common disagreements raised in these works focused on the notion of motivation and how the separate goals of criminals and terror groups affected their ability to cooperate with each other. These arguments range from believing that the opposing motivations of terrorists and criminals prevent them from sustaining any form of cooperation, at one extreme, to arguing that criminals and terrorists did not have different end goals and that cooperation can be mutually beneficial, at the other.

One instance of an author believing that the differing motivations of organized criminals and terrorist groups would prevent any form of continued cooperation or alliance is Chris Dishman in "Terrorism, Crime, and Transformation." Dishman stated that “little evidence suggests that Mafia groups and terrorists are interested in pursuing collaborative arrangements with each other to traffic contraband or commit other violent acts” (2) and gives several reasons of why such combined efforts remains unlikely. One such reason is that terrorist organizations are motivated by inherently different reasons than what drives organized criminal groups. Dishman explained that the terrorist organization is attempting to change an aspect of society or government and self identifies as a champion of “the greater good,” whereas a criminal serves their own interests and is not focused on the livelihood of
others, and that these differences make collaboration, especially anything semi-permanent, nearly impossible. Additionally, the organized criminal is concerned with preserving the current state of the world in which they are acting because it allows them to produce a profit; therefore, working with an organization trying to make dramatic changes to that system would work against the organized criminal’s goals. Dishman also argued that the increased attention collaboration would draw from law enforcement is something that both organizations try to prevent. He concluded that with all of these barriers to cooperation, terrorist organizations are far more likely to develop criminal functions within their existing organization than to develop an alliance with an outside group.

Presenting an opposite opinion, Nicole Contegiacomo argued that both terrorist leaders and organized crime “bosses” are rational actors and are only participating in the nexus because it is in their interest to do so. Contegiacomo presented case studies on al Qaeda and the Albanian mafia, stating that “these groups have entered into the crime-terror nexus not only with each other, but with numerous other groups” and “have proven that organized criminals and terrorists are gaining more by working together at the current time than working alone” (35). This argument is supported by Annette Hübschle who, in her article "From Theory to Practice: Exploring the Organized Crime-Terror Nexus in Sub-Saharan Africa," explained that cooperation between the two differently motivated groups seems to be based on “temporary consistent interests.” By stating this, Hübschle recognized that despite the length of alliance, working with another organization may be in the best interest of all involved.

Svante E. Cornell further argued not only that the cooperation that is necessary for nexus relationships to form can be mutually beneficial to the individual actors, but that these two actors can in fact have similar goals and motivations. Cornell made this argument when she states “the criminalization of an insurgent movement or the criminalization of a state institution may fulfill the same purpose for a criminal network: both serve to weaken the rule of law” (39). In this instance, both organization benefit because they both thrive in areas of weak governance.

These different arguments underscore the differing opinions on how long these alliances may last. As previously noted, Chris Dishman, in "The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge," believed that short term, let alone any long standing
cooperation, is unlikely. Others, such as Louise A. Shelley, believed that long-term relationships can be formed. Shelley, who discussed this possibility in her work “The Unholy Trinity: Transnational Crime, Corruption, and Terrorism,” believed that there are few deterrents for criminals and terrorists to work together and that “the terrorist-transnational crime relationship extends beyond a marriage of convenience that generates profits or provides logistics: it goes to the very heart of the relationship between crime groups and the state” (104). Nicole Contegiacomo argued that long lasting, mutually beneficial nexus-based relationships are already in existence, citing her studies of al Qaeda and the Albanian mafia.

In these works as a whole and in comparing them to the previously discussed government and military publications, several trends emerge. Just as the military and government works, the authors and publishing institutions are trying to serve a purpose with their works. While these purposes are nowhere near as uniform as those seen in the government and military sources, they still must be examined. The main motivations for these types of publications is to either support or disprove an idea, which in this case is focused on the crime-terror nexus and its various aspects and implications. This leads to the assumption that many of the authors, if not all, truly believed what they were publishing, and that their own opinions would only benefit the larger discussion. This means that these authors were subject matter experts who had thoroughly researched, studied, and usually had written previously published works on similar topics. This was depicted in an interesting nuance about these publications: A majority of the authors cited their own previous works. With ten of the sixteen authors, more than 60%, using their previous works as evidence for their current argument, a stark difference can be made between these publications and the documents originating from government and military source, not one of which used the author’s previous works for support. It is important to note that this practice can lead to the replication of outdated or false information.

**MEDIA PUBLICATIONS**

Thirteen media publications focusing on the crime-terror nexus and its activities were studied, including publications from *The Washington Post*, the *American Forces Press Service*, international new sources, and specialized online media outlets. While many works focus solely on one event and cover much less substantive data, patterns do emerge.
One thematic commonality that emerges throughout the works was that terrorist organizations benefit from participating in criminal activity and by forging relationships with organized criminal groups. While this argument was not overtly made in all of the works, many state that terrorists are funding their organizations through criminal enterprises or that terrorists participating in relationships with established criminal syndicates pose a threat to national security.

One article that stated that crime has been an invaluable funding source for terrorists is "The Business of al Qaeda," by Renny McPherson. In the article, McPherson argues that al Qaeda “raised millions of dollars annually through activities such as simple car theft and resale of valuable items such as cars, generators and electric cable, and hijacking truckloads of goods, such as clothing” (par. 9). While McPherson makes no mention of any cooperation between al Qaeda and organized criminals, it has been previously established that the creation of in-house capabilities constitutes nexus activity. In her work, "The Crime-Terrorism Nexus", Wibke Hansen states that for several reasons, including increases law enforcement attention and differing motivations, long-term associations between criminals and terrorists are improbable, and that developing these in-house capabilities is a more desirable way to benefit from criminal activity.

Several works focused on several specific criminal activities that terrorists were profiting from that were not mentioned in previously examined publications. One such work is "Terrorism Goes to Sea" by Gal Luft and Anne Korin. In this work, the authors points out that terrorists are increasingly participating in acts of piracy, something that presently is associated with organized crime groups. The terrorists in question have come to see piracy not only as an effective means of funding, with ransom fees averaging “$100,000 per ship,” (par. 7) but also as a method of conducting future terrorists attacks. While maritime attacks are not a new concept, with the authors mentioning the October 2000 attack on the USS Cole while refueling in a Yemeni harbor that killed 17 sailors and the attack on the Limburg, a French oil tanker that also occurred off Yemen. These attacks lead the authors to conclude that the purview with which terrorists are viewing piracy and its possibilities is expanding. The authors noted that an attack on the world fuel supplies would have an immediate and drastic effect on global economies, and that terrorist have taken notice.
Another form of crime that terrorists are profiting from is wildlife crime, which is discussed in "Elephant, Rhino Poaching Funds African Terrorists" by Johan Bergenas. Bergenas noted that an investigation by the Elephant Action league found that “illegal ivory funds as much as 40 per cent of the operations of al-Shabab,” (par. 4) a group that in November 2013 attacked a mall in Nairobi, killing sixty people. The author also continues to state that wildlife poaching is extremely lucrative, with a rhino horn bringing in as much as “$50,000 per kilogram on the black market” (par. 3). While the policing of poaching areas in currently largely ineffective, Bergenas states that with several very small adjustments, a huge difference can be made in arresting and deterring poachers. One of his suggestions is that the Pentagon’s ability to patrol and prevent poaching, as well as other illegal activity by the Lord’s Resistance Army should be extended to all terrorist organizations. He adds that the use of drone technology and satellite imagery would be a cost-effective means of prevention.

In addition, several works identified the environmental situations that promote crime-terror nexus activities. Misha Glenny, in her article "The Lost War," suggested that despite the differences in motivations between these illicit actors, they work together and cooperate because they tend to be concentrated in the same, usually conflict ridden regions characterized by scourges of illicit crime. Glenny argued that as these criminal “swamps” expand and enlarge, more areas and individuals will come into contact with the crime-terror nexus, and that modernized nations are no exception. As support, he noted the fact that British Columbia, a province in a first-world country that borders the United States, has the greatest number of criminal groups in the world. This argument means that anywhere that criminal profits are substantive enough, regardless of the national control or development experienced, the potential for crime-terror nexus activities is a possibility.

Another work, “The Treat of Global Poverty” by Susan E. Rice, stated that not only do nations with high poverty rates traditionally have been unable to adequately patrol their lands and enforce rule of law, which, as previously mentioned, increases the likelihood of nexus activities, but that these nations shape individuals who are more likely to become involved with such illicit activity and recruitment by terrorist organizations. Rice stated that this likelihood is because of several conditions that characterize weak, poverty-ridden states, including lack of state-offered social welfare programs, a shortage in legitimate job opportunities, and the creation of a power vacuum when these states fail.
When a state does not offer the social welfare programs its constituents require, they present any willing organization with an opportunity to fill that void and gain the admiration and support of a populace. Both criminal and terrorist organizations have done this and, in doing so, have generated not only the gratitude and support of the local community in which they operate, but also have influenced a new generation of potential insurgents. Rice stated that the radical groups in Pakistan, Egypt, and Palestine are examples of this. When this mindset is combined with an individual who is unable to support themselves by earning an honest income, they are often forced to look into ulterior job prospects, including crime and terror networks. Rice solidified this notion by citing a study at the University of Maryland’s Center for International Development and Conflict Management, which stated “countries with low income, productive efficiency, and life expectancy, as well as a high male youth bulge, were more likely to experience political violence, including terrorism” (Rice 77). If these states should fail, “the climate for predatory transnational actors is improved exponentially” (78) because they no longer need to contend with any state actors, regardless of strength, when operating their organizations. State failure also increases the hardships placed on the populace, exacerbating the negative impacts of poverty in promoting crime and terror individually, which gives both organizations a substantive base for cooperation.

Another commonality between media publications on the crime-terror nexus was that several authors argued that despite the threat posed by the nexus, it did present law enforcement and policy makers with several policing opportunities. One such work is "Link Grows Between Terrorism, Organized Crime, Officials Say," by Karen Parrish. Parrish established this argument by citing Michael A. Sheehan’s recent testimony before Senate Armed Services Committee. Sheehan, the assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low-intensity conflict, stated that “the national strategies governing the two missions [the war on crime and the war on terror] are complementary and mutually reinforcing,” (par. 3) noting that crime and terror should not necessarily be approached as two separate threats and that impacting one side of the nexus effects the opposite as well. This is mirrored in Robert K. Ackerman’s article "Terrorists, Organized Crime Increase Teaming Efforts," which also cited Michel A. Sheehan’s testimony. Ackerman, however, chooses to highlight a separate segment of testimony in which Sheehan states “by integrating counterterrorism, counter narcotics and other types of transnational organized crime capabilities, resources and
authorities, the impact of our actions are more strategic, more effective, and [make] better use of available resources” (par. 8).

This same approach is mentioned in another publication, "Paying for Terror" by David E. Kaplan, Bay Fang, and Soni Sangwan. In this work, Kaplan, Fang, and Sangwan state that the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) is targeting the trafficking network used by the Taliban in Afghanistan. In the approach, the DEA is hoping to replicate its “kingpin strategy” that was successful in decimating the Medellin and Cali Cartel in Columbia to target the entire illicit network. This approach has already been effective, with two key players in the Afghan drug trade now in U.S. custody.

A final commonality was that several works had an increased focus on Western nations. This concept has already been addressed in the work by Misha Glenny and was expanded by Daveed Gartenstein-Ross in his work “Terrorism Trends Old and New.” In this article, Gartenstein-Ross argued that the West is being exploited by terrorists and criminals involved in the nexus to “raise funds, obtain equipment, and propagandize,” (par. 2) and that this is causing an increase in the number of active terrorists in Western countries. Pat Milton, in his article "FBI Worries about an Osama-Mobsters Link," discussed that in addition to these foreign terrorists, individuals with terrorist sympathies residing in the U.S. are being targeted through Internet communications, which can lead to the development of terrorist cells that are much less likely to be detected by law enforcement and do not have to cross border security and screening procedures to perpetrate a crime within the United States. An exception to this can be seen in two works written by Jim Garamone for the American Forces Press Service. In “Kelly Warns of Potential Crime-Terrorism Nexus in Latin America”, Garamone described General John F. Kelly’s concern about the growing influence many Middle Eastern based organizations are experiencing in Latin America. Kelley believed that this growing presence could have a very serious effect on the United States’ ability to combat terrorism. Kelly explained his concern stemmed from the fact that this influence could lead to votes based on UN sanctions, specifically those imposed on Iran. In “U.S. Combats Nexus of Illicit Networks, WMD Proliferation”, Garamone describes the threat posed by the potential for nexus actors to use pre-established smuggling routes in South America to support the movement of weapons of mass destruction.
These works, when analyzed as a whole, present several distinct differences than those that were seen in the government, military, and academic and professional journals. For example, each of these works were strikingly shorter than all of the previously examined documents, with each work typically only analyzing one event or trend and providing limited analysis. This is important to note when discussing that while not all of the works presented information on the same topics, there were no two articles that directly disagreed with the others content or findings. The lack of conflicting stances does not imply that there is a uniform stance within the media world regarding the crime-terror nexus, but is in fact more indicative to the brevity of each work.

In addition, similarly to the other publication origins, the motives of the authors must be considered. The media’s job, historically, is to inform the masses. While this is still true, it must be taken into account that profit also drives the media, with companies fighting for ratings and competing over readers. This has led to the development of “entertainment” media, where historically informative sources attempt to release only the most exciting, captivating, and entertaining stories. This can be seen in the phrase “if it bleeds, it leads,” meaning that stories that focus on the darker side of human nature, violence, often attract more viewers or readers and are therefore given priority. When this concept is applied to media publications on the crime-terror nexus, it must be taken into account that the authors of these pieces or their publishing company chose them because they are more entertaining and evoke more emotion from the American populous. To say a threat does not exist does not play into the “if it bleeds, it leads” paradigm. This consideration is not meant to diminish the information presented within these articles, as many are published by extremely reputable institutions and provide support for their arguments, but is instead meant to question what media works on the nexus were not published and what information would have been contained in those.
CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATE OF PUBLICATION

The works studied in the thesis also displayed certain trends and arguments based on their years of publication. Examining these trends allows for an understanding of the evolution of the crime-terror nexus as a concept. A complete list of works separated by date of publication can be found in Appendix B.

1994 THROUGH 2004

The works written between 1994 and 2004 depict the notion that the crime-terror nexus was still a developing concept and that the authors and institutions varied in several aspects of their arguments. In addition, the small number of works published during this period (eight out of fifty-one examined) also lends credence to the fact that the nexus was not a top concern for policy makers or research topic among authors. These works tended to focus on the use of criminal tactics by terrorists as a means of fundraising but failed to mention the existence of any nexus, discuss why these alliances may form and under what conditions, argue that terrorists and organized criminals would rather not ally with each other, and their differing stances on the available evidence suggesting the existence of a crime-terror nexus.

Two works that discuss terrorist and organized crimes adopting tactics commonly associated with the other but did not mention the crime-terror nexus are "Links Between Terrorism and Drug Trafficking: A Case of "Narco-Terrorism"?" by Alex Schmid and "Terrorism Goes to Sea" by Gal Luft and Anne Korin, both of which were published in 2004. In his work, Schmid discussed the probability of cooperation between criminals and terrorists, something he adamantly believes will not occur. Schmid explored the types of linkages that may occur between terrorists and criminals, however skeptically noted that others in this field believe there is a strong possibility of collaboration. He argued that instead of alliances forming between the two differently driven groups, terrorists will instead choose to develop in-house criminal components. Despite the fact that this behavior has been
identified as nexus-related behavior by other authors, Schmid did not once mention the existence of the crime-terror nexus. In their work, Luft and Korin discussed the fact that terrorists are increasingly turning to piracy, something traditionally done by organized criminal groups, as a means of funding their organizations and potentially conducting attacks. They also failed to mention that this behavior may be tied into the crime-terror nexus and may be an additional example of terrorists utilizing tactics that have been successful for organized criminals.

The fact that these authors did not attribute the incidents they studied and wrote on to the crime-terror nexus can mean several things. For one, it may be that the crime-terror nexus was something outside of their purview, a result of the limited research and attention it had received at the time. It may also mean that the authors did not agree with the nexus hypothesis, most likely the case for Alex Schmid, and did not feel the need to mention a notion that they believed to be fallacy.

In addition, these early works spent considerable time exploring the environmental and organizational conditions that can facilitate crime-terror relationships. One noted reason for the nexus is that it serves a purpose for both organizations, meaning that despite their differing motivations, both can profit from working together. One such work, Glenn Curtis and Tara Karacan, identified an example of this mutually benefitting relationship when evaluating the relationship between the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the Columbian terrorist group, the FARC. Through training the FARC in weapons and explosives, the IRA was able to get not only payment, but is now given access to a worldwide network of arms smugglers and is given an unpatrolled area in which to develop its own arms.

In addition, in his work "Transnational Criminal Organizations: Strategic Alliances," written in 1994, Phil Williams discussed that the loss of state sponsored terrorism after the fall of the Soviet Union following the Cold War was a large factor in increasing the amount of cooperation seen between terrorists and criminals. With a large source of funding no longer available, cash strapped terrorist organizations were forced to look elsewhere to support their networks and to crime as a means of replacing that lost revenue. In addition, Williams stated that the criminals involved in these relationships also are benefited from them, “criminal organizations may find that the opportunities for large scale extortion through the possession of smuggled nuclear material encourages them to use the threat of
terror for business purposes.” In these examples, both the criminal and terrorist organization profit while preserving their individual goals.

In his work, Alex Schmid, despite not believing that cooperation was likely, listed several scenarios and environmental factors that can facilitate terrorist and criminal alliances. These eight situations, according to Schmid, are

1. Access to greater financial resources for terrorist attacks;
2. Independence from state sponsorship;
3. The possibility of building an economic base, compensating for a lack of support;
4. Access to specialist skills (e.g. forging travel documents);
5. Facilitation of cross-border movements (use of smuggling route);
6. Substitute activity during armistices or at end of hostilities;
7. Coming into contact with a wider range of potential recruits, who are already outlaws;
8. Access to expertise in illicit transfer and laundering of money for foreign operations.

Schmid then stated that these potential positives that come from working closely with organized criminals are countered by additional factors that may make cooperation unfavorable, including increased attention from law enforcement and the possibility of losing support from religious followers who may not agree with criminal activity.

In addition to exploring the conditions in which cooperation may arise, several authors and works published within this time period discussed the potential forms the crime-terror nexus could take. This is extensively covered in "The Crime – Terror Continuum: Tracing the Interplay between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism" by Tamara Makarenko. Makarenko argued that the crime-terror nexus exists in a spectrum and that where an organization falls is based on how tight the alliance or relationship between the criminal and terrorist groups are. The “black hole syndrome” is characterized as “when a single entity simultaneously exhibits criminal and terrorist characteristic” (Makarenko 131). Makarenko agrees with authors like Schmid in that organizations would rather opt to create their own in-house criminal or terrorist capabilities, but states that this constitutes as part of the spectrum.

Another author that discussed the potential arrangements terrorist and criminal cooperation may take is Chris Dishman in his work "Terrorism, Crime, and Transformation". In this work, Dishman, much like Schmid, argued that terrorists and criminals will not
willingly work with one another because their individual motivations are too strong and too opposing. This often led to the creation of in-house criminal or terrorist components. Where Dishman largely disagreed with Schmid is that he believed this will lead to the transformation of terrorist organizations into criminal, profit-motivated syndicates. Dishman comes to this conclusion not by looking at the motivation of the organization, as he states that many will continue to proclaim their political goals to retain membership and public support, but because “significant amounts of the group’s energies and resources are directed at committing profit-driven criminal acts,” (6) Dishman believed that this transformation poses additional security threats, as politically minded groups can be negotiated with and the conflict has the potential to end if their political demands are met. This is not the case with profit driven groups, who do not seek any “end state,” but simply look to increase the organization’s and their individual fortunes.

In opposition, a Library of Congress paper written by Rex Hudson titled *Terrorists and Organized Crime Groups in the Tri-Border Area (TBA) of South America*, stated that direct cooperation is occurring and that the original motivations of the groups involved remain the same. The work also added that terrorist organization with different ideological centers (Sunni-based al Qaeda and Shi’ite-based Hezballah) are also working together to raise funds. The work focused directly on active alliances between terrorist organizations and criminal networks, stating that there are examples of terrorists utilizing the smuggling networks that have been established in the region, money-laundering methods, and counterfeit- goods trade. This is seen as mutually beneficial, with both groups raising money that they can use towards their own goals.

One important fact about these works, many of which seem opposing, is that they are all describing actions that today are seen by some as examples of the crime-terror nexus. These differences in opinion on what is involved with the nexus and what is not can be explained by the novelty of the concept during the period in which these works were written.

An additional difference between several of the works examined in this thesis was the author’s perception on the available research and examples of the crime-terror nexus. Both previously mentioned authors Alex Schmid and Chris Dishman stated that there were limited examples of terrorists working with criminal organizations. They then used this to support their claims that cooperation and alliance between the two organizations was unlikely. This is
contradicted by the numerous examples used by other authors, including Lt. Col. Jennifer Hesterman in her work "Transnational Crime and the Criminal-Terrorist Nexus: Synergies and Corporate Trends". The Lt. Col. cited ten known examples of criminals working closely with individual terrorist cells and with the larger organization and countless other examples of indirect nexus activity, such as adopting money laundering techniques and taxing drug smugglers working in their areas of operation. Hudson also included numerous examples of well-known terrorist organizations, including al Qaeda and Hezballah, sending operatives to the Tri-Border Area to work with the established criminal networks, which include the Russian and Chinese mafias and abundant local criminal groups.

This difference in perception of available evidence of the crime-terror nexus may have to do with the sources of each of these works. Both Schmid and Dishman’s works were journals, while the sources that provided several examples of nexus activity were government and military publications. It may have been that the authors of the military and government works were aware of more sensitive or classified information that had not been made public at the time of publication.

2005 THROUGH 2010

This period includes the majority of works studies, with a total of twenty-two publications, including four government, three military, nine journal articles, and six media publications.

The four government publications from this time period tended to focus on better understanding the crime-terror nexus and exploring the policy implication it would require. In a speech titled “Narco-Trafficking: What Is the Nexus With the War on Terror?”, David M. Luna, the director for Anticrime Programs in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, stated that the U.S. government and its political leaders need more information on the crime-terror nexus in order to properly address it and that the problem is more complex than it may appear. Luna mentioned that the illegal activities terrorists and organized criminals are involved with are supported by “a web of secondary or related criminal activity.” In addition, the corruption within various governments that facilitates the growth and support of terrorism, criminal activity, and the nexus must be examined and properly eradicated before the nexus can be dealt with. John Picarelli also calls for additional
research and information in "Expert Working Group Report on International Organized Crime". One of the group’s findings reiterates Luna’s previous point, that the corruption that allows these illicit networks to gain strongholds must be identified and examined. The emerging network structure of terrorist groups and criminal organizations was also examined. The European Union Organized Crime Threat Assessment, 2007 noted that this structure made it more difficult for law enforcement to properly police these organizations “their resilience can be based on the ability to replace compromised or unreliable criminal members and the low profile of their multi-centered overall structure” (Europol 10).

The majority of each government publication was focused on examining potential policy changes that would make the global community more suited to combating the international threats posed by the crime-terror nexus. One of the suggestions made was that the allocation of resources and personnel within the United States’ federal law enforcement agencies should be re-examined. Immediately after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, an unprecedented shift towards counterterrorism occurred, leaving many other departments to deal with the same problem sets, including organized crime, with less funding and with fewer personnel. This was mentioned as a possibility by The Expert Working Group and by Kristin Finklea in her paper Organized Crime in the United States: Trends and Issues for Congress. Both of these publications suggested that the current distribution of resources within the federal government be examined, and that departments tasked with emerging threats be given additional resources. The Congressional Research Service cited the drop in the number of agents tasked with organized crime and the decrease in number of organized criminal cases worked by each agent as examples of the nation’s inability to properly police organized crime activity. While agent allocation remains fairly constant, the utilization of these agents to organized crime related cases steadily drops, indicating that less time is being spent policing organized crime within the United States premier law enforcement agencies. Ensuring that organized crime gets the proper amount attention from federal law enforcement helps in combating the crime-terror nexus and terrorism in general by cutting off vital supply lines and smuggling routes.

These works also called for increased international and domestic cooperation in addressing the crime-terror nexus. Finklea also stated that it was equally important for domestic agencies to convey their findings to international agencies to ensure law
enforcement personnel have the most complete and up to date information. One of the suggested methods to ensure this information sharing occurs was to utilize international organizations that operate in conjunction with domestic law enforcement. An example of this type of organization is the United States National Central Bureau (USNCB) of the International Criminal Police (INTERPOL). INTERPOL operates in 190 countries, and each member country operates its own National Central Bureau, where it has the ability to relay request for information between that nation’s law enforcement agencies and the international community.

The three military works published within this time frame spoke to the changing nature of terrorist groups, the opportunities the crime-terror nexus presents to law enforcement, and on how to adapt military practices to better contest these changing threats. Gretchen Peters, in her work *Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan*, discussed that the terrorist and militant groups operating in the region are funding their organizations through criminal pursuits and are increasingly motivated by profit. Some of the criminal activities being utilized are collecting “taxes” (referred to as donations by the insurgents) on the local population, kidnap for ransom schemes, and involvement in the drug trade.

Peters also stated that this shift in behavior in terrorist organizations presents several weak points in their overall political and public image campaigns and that these should be capitalized upon. One of these areas of opportunity, according to Peters, is that the involvement in criminal activity is causing the public to relinquish their support and making them question the actual motivation of these organizations. Organizations, such as the Taliban, are aware of this and trying to change their image and mask their involvement in criminal activities. This is illustrated by the issuing of a Code of Conduct in what Peters called a “hearts and minds campaign” to attempt to win back public support. This waiver in support can and should be taken advantage of by our coalition forces as it presents an opportunity to remove a dangerous terrorist organization from an area.

These developments in the way terrorist organizations are operating require our coalition forces to adjust accordingly. This is explored extensively by Joseph D. Celeski in his work "Operationalizing COIN" and by John B. Alexander in his work "Convergence: Special Operations Forces and Civilian Law Enforcement". Celeski discussed how the COIN,
or counterinsurgency, doctrine should be changed, arguing that a “blending a form of transnational COIN techniques with international and internal law enforcement measure may be the best method for defeating the ‘grey stew’” (2), a term he uses to describe the current insurgent situation. Alexander agreed with this analysis, stating that as many of our coalition forces are being put into roles that increasingly resemble local law enforcement functions and that they need to be trained accordingly and that doing so will have a tremendous impact on their effectiveness.

The eight academic and professional journals that were published during this time frame focused primarily on the notion that criminals and terrorists were working together because it was in their best interest to do so, the environments that promote nexus relationships, the hybridization of the two entities, and touched on the enforcement implications of the nexus.

One of the works that thoroughly discussed the notion that the crime-terror nexus was in existence because it benefited both parties was Nicole Contegiacomo in her thesis Rational Choice Theory and the Crime-Terror Nexus: How and Why Terrorist and Organized Criminal Groups are Working Together. Contegiacomo argues that “these two types of groups only form a ‘nexus’ when it increases their ability to achieve their motive, above and beyond their independent capabilities” (3). She further states that nexus relationships have expanded in response to international communication advances and the increased pressure being exerted from law enforcement. Unlike previously mentioned work, Contegiacomo argued that transformation will only occur when a group’s original motive is no longer beneficial and that nexus relationships are not indicative of this metamorphosis.

Chris Dishman, in his 2005 work "The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge", added to Contegiacomo’s argument by stating that the decentralization of many terrorist and criminal organizations had facilitated the building of nexus relationships. In this work, Dishman argues that cell-level operatives, now forced to support themselves and no longer having to contend with a singular leader that may discourage such relationships are more likely to turn to crime and criminal groups out of necessity, “cash-strapped cells are now willing to conduct any crime in order to stay afloat” (245).

Mirroring these statements, Louise A. Shelley and John T. Picarelli argue that despite different motivations, terrorist and criminal organizations have many similarities that make
cooperation advantageous for both. Supporting all of these arguments is Svante E. Cornell, who stated that terrorists and organized criminals benefit from working together because their cooperation serves as a means of weakening the enforcement and governmental authority of the state they operate within. This in turn creates an environment where these illicit actors are able to function openly without concern of prosecution.

The journal articles published during this period also tended to focus on the environment in which the crime-terror nexus was active. One example of this is seen in Louise A. Shelley’s article "The Unholy Trinity: Transnational Crime, Corruption, and Terrorism". In this, the author stated “the regions where transnational crime groups and terrorists converge, particularly the tri-border area in Latin America, the Balkans, the Caucus, and the conflict zones of West Africa, and Afghanistan have provided a safe haven for the nurturing of terrorists and their operations” (109) adding that transnational criminals also focus on regions where states have partial to no control over their territories.

An interesting tendency in these works was the discussion of the potential hybridization of crime and terror organizations. Chris Dishman, in "The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge", characterizes this type of organization as “dominated by persons in cells, fronts, or other organizational components that retain multiple motives and desired end-states” (247). This is markedly different from the emerging profit minded terrorist theories seen in earlier arguments, with these individuals preserving their original motivations while adopting additional goals or consisting of an organization where multiple members have different motivations. This concept is also discussed by Peng Wang in his article "The Crime-Terror Nexus: Transformation, Alliance, Convergence". Here, Wang argued that despite their increased cooperation and potentially shifting goals, the majority of groups involved in the crime-terror nexus keep their initial, primary motivation and that there “is no evidence to prove that the criminal and political groups have converged into a single entity with similar ideologies, motives, and views of success and failure” (11). This convergence was seen by the earlier works as a potential possibility but as of more resent publications, had not yet come to be a reality.

A final pattern seen in the journal articles from this time frame is the potential law enforcement implications. One such work is “Crime and Terrorism” by Robert Killebrew. In this article, Killebrew argued that the United States should take an approach that fuses
diplomatic, military, and law enforcement traits and actions. Killebrew also stated that the economics of the nexus provides a potential opportunity for tracking and identifying these illicit actors, “we and our allies must continue to reinforce and police international economic systems, to include identification of ‘black’ accounts and banks that likely support illegal or extremist activities” (par. 7). Chris Dishman, in "The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge", added to this by stating that the U.S. could benefit from the creation of a separate counterterrorism focused agency. Dishman adds validity to this suggestion by mentioning that “the creation of a domestic intelligence service” (248) was one of the 9-11 Commission’s recommendations. Dishman then makes a final recommendation, that despite the current divisions between jurisdictions and the ways in which crimes versus national security threats are addressed, by stating that by “separating criminal from terrorist investigations could hinder, rather than help, identify and arrest terrorist” (249). This is another distinction from earlier works, the majority of which stated that crime and terror investigations should remain separate.

The six media publications from this time are extremely varied in the topics they cover, with only two aspects repeating between works: The growing concern for nexus activity within the United States and the he environments in which the nexus can originate. The possibility of the crime-terror nexus occurring within the United States had not been discussed as a possibility in the publications written within the previous time frame. It was mentioned by David E. Kaplan, Bay Fang, and Soni Sangwan in their article "Paying for Terror" when they cite Joseph Billy, deputy chief of the FBI’s counterterrorism division “we see a lot of individual pockets of it in the United States… left unchecked, it’s very worrisome- this is one we have to be aggressive with” (5) Kaplan, Fang, and Sangwan then went on to discuss several for profit scams being run within the country where the money was being sent back to Hamas and Hezbollah. The possibility of nexus activity occurring within the U.S. is also discussed by Daveed Gartenstein-Ross. Gartenstein-Ross stated that terrorist organization are able to accomplish more by acting in Western nations and that “Western countries can be used as bases to raise funds, obtain equipment, and propagandize” (par. 6). While he did not mention any active cases of nexus relationships taking place within the U.S., Gartenstein-Ross stated that as these organizations continue their search for
funds and operational targets, the nation may be increasingly more desirable for terrorist operatives.

The only other commonality between media works from this period was the discussion of certain environmental aspects that can lead to the evolution of the crime-terror nexus. One of the works that spoke to this notion was Susan E. Rice’s "The Threat of Global Poverty." In this, Rice argued that those experiencing extreme poverty and that live in areas where the state is either unwilling or unable to provide any aide are more likely to sympathize with terrorists and organize crime groups, will benefit from their organizations, and will be easy future recruits. In addition, Misha Glenny, in her work "The Lost War", stated that an environment characterized by prohibition of drugs, as is seen in much of the world today, actually create the demand for those illegal substances. This demand means that the revenues for their sales will be high, precisely why criminals and terrorist are interested in. This is the only argument of its kind within all of the documents, and it is an argument that warrants further examination.

The publications from 2005 to 2010 show an evolution in the overall understanding and implications of the crime-terror nexus. While the 1994 to 2004 time period was characterized by mixed understandings of what activities were classified as nexus related or not, discussions on the potential threat posed by such collaborations, and differing ideas on supporting material are not an issue in this time frame. These works instead discussed why and how the nexus was formed, adding credence to the earlier works that established that these relationships were actually forming, even if it was just the adoption of the other’s techniques.

2011 THROUGH 2014

The publications in this time period offer the most current opinions on the crime-terror nexus and its implications to international security. These works include six government publications, three military publications, three academic and professional journals, and six media publications.

The first trend seen in these works is that the existence of the crime-terror nexus is no longer questioned, with publications stating its overt existence. This is seen in Europe’s Crime-Terror Nexus: Links Between Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups in the European
Union, published by the European Parliament, when it was stated that “there is ample global evidence that ties OC (organized crime) and terrorism exist” (8). The study goes on to find that the majority of nexus relationships exist in in conflict zones and areas lacking state control, and that no active examples were located in the European Union member countries. A statement to the same effect is also made by Christina Schori Liang in her paper Shadow Networks: The Growing Nexus of Terrorism and Organized Crime, “today, most terrorists are engaged in some form of organized crime and a growing number of organized crime cartels are engaged in political violence” (2). Schori Liang adds supporting examples to this statement, including that al Qaeda has used its relationship with the Camorra Mafia to smuggle its operative into Europe and acquire forged travel documents. Despite the agreement between authors and institutions that the nexus exists and constitutes a serious security threat, there is still a consensus that the currently available information on the intricacies of these relationships is severely lacking and is insufficient in presenting policy makers and military personnel with an adequate assessment that would allow them to react accordingly.

Another trend in these works is the discussion on how and why these relationships are formed more so now than at any other period in time. Many works touched on the previously established notion that terrorists and criminals often thrive in the same conflict ridden, low government control, impoverished regions and come into contact there. Additionally, two government publications discussed another potential catalyst for nexus relationships: prisons. This is interesting because it was not mentioned by any of the earlier works, regardless of publication origin. One work making this statement is Terrorism and Transnational Crime: Foreign Policy Issues for Congress, published by the Congressional Research Service and written by John Rollins and Liana Sun Wyler. This publication explores a wide array of potential areas of overlap, identified “key nodes, where interaction is most likely, include prisons; cyberspace, particularly online opportunities for social networking; and ungoverned or difficult-to-govern spaces” (1). Schori Liang reiterated this sentiment in her paper, where she stated “prisons are also important meeting grounds for both terrorists and organized criminals” (2). She adds validity to her argument by stating the individuals that carried out the train bombings in Madrid, Spain, were in fact organized criminals who, while in prison, were recruited by terrorists to carry out the attack.
In explaining why the nexus has evolved into its current forms, the European Parliament, in their publication *Europe’s Crime-Terror Nexus, Links between Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups in the European Union*, stated that the increased international pressure following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks forced terrorist to adapt new methods and practices. This change was spurred by “enhanced national counter-terrorism efforts; greater concentration on the operations of terrorist groups led to the realization by law enforcement and security services of many countries that ties between OC and terrorists groups did exist” and that “these linkages usually led to the outsourcing of specific operational requirements” (16), including access to smuggling routes that could be used for human or illicit goods transfers or the production of false passports. This may explain why the earliest period of publications contained so many differing claims; the nexus was both poorly understood and was still in an evolutionary phase.

Another trend seen in government publications from this time frame is that’s these works not only explored the nexus dynamic from the perspective of a terrorist organization, by also from that of an organized criminal. While this is mentioned in previous works, very few examples are given and the security threat posed by criminals using terror tactics was not thoroughly explored. Schori Liang stated that Mexican drug cartels are adopting the techniques terrorist use to intimidate, much like the terrorist have adopted criminal methods of fund raising. This is seen in the cartels activities that “are deepening the cycle of violence by targeting civilians, carrying out emblematic assassinations of members of the military, police, government, and city mayors with grisly beheadings and public displays of their victim” (Schori Liang 3). This sentiment is added to by the European Parliament’s publication on the nexus within the European Union, which states “international cases of OCGs using terror tactics to progress their aims are most commonly found in states experiencing political transformation, instability or limited political control” (18), the same types of environments that foster nexus activity.

The three military publications from this time period all argued that while terrorists inherently have different motivations than organized criminals, this will not stop either organization from entering into an alliance with the other or adopting the other’s strategies. The "FINAL REPORT: Trans - Atlantic Dialogue on Combating Crime - Terror Pipelines; Dismantling Converging Threat Networks to Strengthen Global Security", published by the
National Defense University, discussed the array of criminal activity terrorist organizations are actively involved with, most notably the drug trade, adding that “violent extremists may justify their involvement in drug trafficking in many creative ways, including as weapons against ‘infidel’ consumers” (4). Another work that mirrors these findings is "The Nexus of Extremism and Trafficking: Scourge of the World or So Much Hype?" by Russell D. Howard and Colleen Traughber. In this work Howard and Traughber discussed several prominent individuals within the national intelligence world that do and do not believe that the nexus possess a legitimate threat to international security before finally agree with the later. In the development of their argument, they discussed at length how terrorists have been able to enter into such relationships with criminals with ease and are greatly benefiting from them. The authors noted that in instances of alliance or cooperation, both parties benefit from the interaction despite having different motivations and end goals.

Additionally, Gretchen Peters argued that even as terrorist organizations involve themselves in illicit activity, the political motivations remain, even if in a diluted form. In her work Haqqani Network Financing: The Evolution of an Industry, Peters began this argument by stating that the leaders of the Haqqani Network, which she characterizes as a crime-terror hybrid organization, are equally motivated by profit as they are by religiously motivated political reform. She then expands this argument by stating that many of the low-level, Haqqani operatives are solely motivated by ideology, and that without these individuals, the organization would fail. This makes the “pious” motivations of the networks members even more important to the survival of the organizations.

The academic and professional journals published in this time period focused on explaining the nexus; either by exploring the different relationships and links it created but also on how, why, and where the relationships form. Luis de la Cortez Ibanez discussed several forms, functions, and ties to illicit activity that the nexus has spurred in his work "To What Extent do Global Terrorism and Organized Criminality Converge? General Parameters and Critical Scenarios". Ibanez stated that nexus relationship are “neither natural nor against nature” (5) and that is means that they can take several forms, including no relationship being the most common. Other relationship forms explored by Ibanez are confluence, or the adoption of methods, hybrid blending, and cooperation. He then suggests that these relationships form in in both small and large “facilitating scenarios,” with small-scale
scenarios including “jails, deprived neighborhoods and areas of large cities and towns or enclaves that touch upon several borders” (12) and large-scale scenarios including entire nation or regions. He stated that the large-scale scenarios have produced the most nexus relationships, and discusses that the weakness of the state enables these relationships to form and grow. He ends by stating that while the crime-terror nexus is not the norm as of now, it is a growing trend that must be stopped.

The two remaining academic and professional journals focused on specific environments and regions where the crime-terror nexus is prevalent. Annette Hübschle, in her work "From Theory to Practice: Exploring the Organized Crime-Terror Nexus in Sub-Saharan Africa", discussed that the fragile rule of law in nearly all of the African nations is conducive to nexus activity because it will not be patrolled. This state weakness is exacerbated by the “porous borders” of the region. Additionally, Hübschle stated that the established criminals networks in the area are attractive to terrorist organizations and that these criminals are more than willing to work with anyone as long as it benefits their organization. This argument is supported by Wibke Hansen in her article "The Failed State – Organized Crime – Terrorism Nexus". In this work, Hansen proclaimed “state failure correlates with the presence of terrorists and organized crime groups” (1) and that this relationship is not causal, but indicates that illicit actors seek out environments in which they feel like they are most likely to avoid state interference. Both Hübschle and Hansen mentioned that by building the strength of a failing nation, the environments where terrorists and criminals most often cooperate will have an enforcing effect on nexus actors, pushing them into areas that are well governed and increasing the likelihood of detection and prosecution.

The six media articles from this time are more varied than those published within the previous periods, with no two works discussing the same aspect of the crime-terror nexus. These publications individually focused in the increased likelihood of weapons of mass destruction proliferation through nexus actors, trends in terrorism and organized crime, that both criminals and terrorists are financially profiting by allying with the other, the failed state environment that is conducive to nexus actors, the wildlife poaching being used as a criminal means of raising money by terrorists, the network structure of al Qaeda.
CHRIS DISHMAN’S CHANGE IN POSITION BETWEEN 2001 AND 2005

The two works by Chris Dishman, "Terrorism, Crime, and Transformation" written in 2001 and "The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge" written in 2005, illustrate the drastic change in perspective an expert can go through in a short period of time depending on the available research, findings of other authors, and the overall opinions in the international community.

In the first of these two works, Dishman first argued that the relationship between criminal and terrorist organizations was inhibited by the individual and contrasting motivations of each group, and that this made alliances improbable. In support of this analysis, Dishman noted that despite both types of organizations have been seen throughout history, they have not yet established long-term relationships. He stated that this is because of several reasons; most notably that terrorist and criminal organizations have different motivations, but also that collaboration with the other would bring unwanted attention from law enforcement and their supporters. Dishman argued that instead of reaching out to criminal organizations will instead choose to develop active criminal components within their existing networks. When cooperation does happen, it is likely to be one time and out of necessity.

In Dishman’s 2005 analysis of the crime-terror nexus, he took a substantially different stance on the likelihood of criminal-terrorist alliances, stating that as these organizations are forced to decentralize in response to in increased attention from law enforcement, their mid to low-level members will increasingly reach out to the opposing group. The individual needs of each cell, Dishman claimed, leads to the creation of individuals who are no longer guided by the singular motivation and leadership of the larger organization and that the lack of contact between the main organization and the cells means that there is little to no enforcement of those who act against the will of the whole. He also stated that these network actors will increasingly attempt to form long-term collaborative relationships with each other, something that was seen as practically impossible in the 2001 article. In addition, Dishman stated that relationships between criminals and terrorists have “collaborated on some level for centuries” (237), a declaration that directly contradicts one of the main supporting arguments in his 2001 work.
This drastic change in position can partially be explained by the emergence of new publications or new intelligence. Dishman, as an author and researcher, is forced to reassess his argument as new information is made available, and the emergence of new facts or trends can, for obvious reasons, lead to an author’s switch in position. Additionally, the role of 9/11 must be analyzed. Dishman’s earlier work, published in January of 2001, occurred before the attacks and his second work was published in 2005, four years afterward. It is undeniable the attack on American soil and citizens had a momentous impact on the nation as a whole, and the intelligence, law enforcement, military, and government segments were no exception. The attack catapulted the perceived and real threat of terrorism to unprecedented levels, causing drastic changes in how those charged with protecting the nation delegated their resources. This led to the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, the reallocation of intelligence analysts and personnel to counterterrorism related jobs, and massive military campaigns. All of these factors could lead to the increase in arguments supporting the crime-terror nexus, as more personnel are tasked with examining the interworkings of terrorist organizations.

Chris Dishman’s change in position on the crime-terror nexus can also be explained as a result of terrorist organizations reactions to increased international pressure following the successful attack. Many previously analyzed authors claimed one of the main driving factors in spurring terrorist and criminal cooperation has been that their traditional means of funding, either through the end of state sponsorship with the fall of the Soviet Union or actions taken by the United States to cut off their financial support, has lead terrorists to pursue criminal activities to support their operations. Speaking to Dishman’s stance, it is likely that there are drastically more terrorists and organized criminals willing to ally and form long-term relationship post 9/11, which means that both arguments could have been correct at the time they were written, and the change in position resulted from changing situations.
CHAPTER 4
ARGUEMENTS ON WHAT FORMAT THE NEXUS WAS TAKING

There were differing opinions between authors on what forms the crime-terror nexus relationships were taking. These thoughts varied in what has forced these actors to ally, the degree in which they converge, and the length which relationships are likely to last. Many of these works mentioned several potential forms the nexus could take, exploring multiple possibilities and either defining one as most probable or not.

INFLUENCE AND THE ADOPTION OF TACTICS

The only agreement made in all of the analyzed publications was that terrorists have adopted several tactics traditionally used by organized criminal groups as a means of fund raising. These tactics varied from involvement in the drug trade, establishing protection fees from local businesses, running various smuggling operations, and low level criminal acts including car theft and residential burglary. Despite the universality of the discussion of terrorists adopting criminal tactics, examples of criminals adopting terrorist’s tactic, including beheading and use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), was mentioned less often.

The implementation of criminal tactics and techniques by terrorist organizations was commonly referred to as the development of “in-house” operations by the publications. Despite the various author’s viewpoints on the likelihood of crime-terror alliances, it was repeatedly stated that in-house operations are preferable to requesting assistance or allying with an outside organization. This is seen in Tamara Makarenko’s work "The Crime – Terror Continuum: Tracing the Interplay between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism", where she states “despite the existence of alliances between organized crime and terrorist groups, groups have increasingly sought to forgo creating alliances if they can” (133). As the 1990’s progressed, it became apparent that criminal and terrorist groups were seeing to “mutate their own structures and organization to take on a non-traditional, financial, or
political role, rather than cooperate with groups who are already effective in those activities” (133). It was additionally noted in several works that this alliance would only occur if there was an insufficient amount of time to develop these criminal capabilities or on an as-needs basis when the criminal component of a terrorist organization is captured or killed by law enforcement or is otherwise unable to perform these functions.

This type of relationship was also referred to as a “marriage of convenience,” meaning that the overlaying purpose for these interactions was because they were needed and because they were available. Several authors noted to the fact that crime and terror groups usually operate in the same, sublegal, worlds and therefore had the ability to influence and contact one another. The main force behind the nexus, according to these authors, was that the traditional funding for terrorist were eliminated and they were made to look to other sources in order to survive.

**COOPERATION AND ALLIANCE**

The notion of criminal and terrorist groups could work together to accomplish their individual goals was one of the most debated and disagreed upon topics found while analyzing the publications for this monograph. As detailed above, several authors stated that this type of relationship will only be formed if accomplishing a task is unable to be fulfilled by the organization in the needed time frame. In addition, many publications noted that when alliances do form, they would only be short term, terminating when the task that led to alliance is completed.

Contradictory to these works, other authors and works examined believed that alliance could and do form, for both long and short term periods, because both organizations benefit from it. One of these authors is Nicole Contegiacomo, who in her thesis stated that, as rational actors, terrorists and criminals, at all hierarchical levels, only because it is in their best interest to do so. This finding is mirrored Rex Hudson’s work, *Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups in the Tri-Border Area (TBA) of South America*. This work stated that the TBA is a growing safe-haven for terrorist organization, one where they not only can avoid law enforcement, but also bring in revenue and plan future attacks. In this region, there are several examples of several terrorist organizations, including Hezbollah and al Qaeda, working directly with the criminal syndicates operating in the area “with the help of
organized crime and corrupt officials, these Islamic terrorist organizations use the TBA to raise funds through illicit activities including drugs- and arms trafficking, counterfeiting, money laundering, forging travel documents, and even pirating software and music” (5). This study did not note the propensity for these alliances to be short term, in fact stating that these relationships appear to be ongoing and mutually beneficial.

**TRANSFORMATION AND CONVERGENCE**

There was an interesting tendency for authors to assess that a terrorist organization’s involvement in criminal activity would be a precursor for that group’s convergence into a criminally motivated organization, with profits superseding ideology as the main goal. This is seen in Gretchen Peters’ work *Haqqani Network Financing: The Evolution of an Industry*. Peters stated this by identifying the organization as a “hybrid organization,” motivated equally by religious ideology and criminal profits. In another work by Peters, *Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Zones of Afghanistan and Pakistan*, she echoed this same statement concerning the actions and motivations of another terrorist organization, the Afghan Taliban, by stating, “The QST (Quetta Shura Taliban) behaves increasingly like a traditional drug cartel. Apparently seeking higher profits, the QST now focuses less on poppy farmer, having turned its attention to the more profitable processing and exporting end of the business” (ii).

Another author that concurred that terrorists using criminal activity to fund their organizations may lead the transformation of organizations is Luis de la Cortez Ibanez in his article "To What Extent do Global Terrorism and Organized Criminality Converge? General Parameters and Critical Scenarios". de la Cortez Ibanez mentioned this when analyzing the possible criminal actions of a terrorist groups

> when their involvement in illegal businesses and operations becomes something that reoccurs or is systematic, and numerous links of revenue are produced, the possibility arises that terrorists can raise the value attributed to these illegal practices, to the point of taking on the economic motivation that is characteristic of organized criminality. (10)

Ibanez also noted that this transformation can be seen in Abu Sayyaf, which was previously a radical Muslim group that now participates almost exclusively in activity that is sure to bring aim monetary gain to the group.

An additional caveat given by several works was that a set of criminal and terrorist organizations may actually converge into a single entity when “two groups arrive at one
situation in which organized crime groups and terrorists gradually become the same or very similar organizations with a convergence of views and beliefs” (Wang 17). While this is discussed among many convergence-prone authors, most note that to date there has not been a case in which an organization, either criminal or terrorists, had aligned itself with the other to the extent of convergence.
CHAPTER 5

COMMONALITIES BETWEEN THE WORKS

The publications analyzed were to undoubtedly contain similarities, as they all focused on the same phenomena. There were several recurring commonalities, including events, studies, and individuals, that appeared across the works.

COMMONLY CITED EVENTS

There were several events that were cited repeatedly across the works analyzed, regardless of the publication. These commonly seen citations are all in support of the crime-terror nexus, and all highlight examples of terrorists and organized criminals either working together or using the same methods. This does not mean that publications that did not agree with the emergence of the crime-terror nexus did not have similarities, but the commonalities seen in those works were statements of the absence of supporting evidence.

The Madrid Bombing

The 2004 bombing of a train in Madrid, Spain was one of the most cited events used to support the crime-terror nexus. This was for several reasons. For one, it exemplifies the alliance between terrorists and criminals, as the actual perpetrators of the bombing were originally criminals, not terrorists, who were recruited by terrorists to carry out the attack while they were in prison. In addition, the bombers used funds procured through the illegal drug trade and other criminal action to finance the attack and to illegally purchase the explosives that were used. This is an instance where, despite differing motives, terrorists and organized criminals were able to work together to accomplish an established goal. The result of these efforts was an extremely well orchestrated event that led to almost 200 deaths and causing global tension, panic, and outrage.

The Bombay Attacks and Dawood Ibrahim

The March 12, 1993 attacks on the city of Bombay, India resulted in the killing of 257 people and injuring over 700 (Kaplan, Fang, and Sangwan). The event was not noted
amongst the authors and works studied in this monograph because of the high death count in an attack coordinated by Muslim extremists, but because one of those involved in planning and perpetrating the attack was Dawood Ibrahim, head of the infamous D-Company and well known criminal king pin throughout the region: “he is, by all accounts, a world class mobster, a soft-spoken, murderous, business man” (Kaplan, Fang, and Sangwan par. 3). Ibrahim not only is known for partaking in this attack, but also for assisting al Qaeda and other Muslim jihadists operating in Pakistan.

It is for these reasons that Ibrahim has been cited by several publications included in this work; he is an example of a top organized criminal willing to work with terrorist organizations to help them achieve their goals. In this case, the motivational factors behind criminals and terrorists is blurred, and shown to be not as limiting as many suggest because Ibrahim, a man obviously motivated by profit, also hold strong terrorists sympathies.

Viktor Bout

Victor Bout is mentioned in connection to his arms smuggling activity, both to criminal and terrorist organizations. Bout, who was arrested in 2011, was thought to be one of the most prolific arms dealers of his time. He was also known to deal weapons to terrorist groups including al Qaeda, Taliban, and others. The motivation of the groups he sold to was inconsequential to him, leading one of the analyzed works to state that he was willing and able to “sell weapons to almost any organization who could pay him” and was able to successfully get weapons to “the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC) and the Taliban, as well as warring factions in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Sudan” (Howard and Traughber 17).

This willingness to work with various organizations provides support for arguments that state that despite the differences in motivations between the two organizations, alliances can and will form. Interestingly, Victor Bout was only mentioned by government or military publications, which, as previously discussed, did not thoroughly examine the effect motivation would have on the formation of crime-terror nexus relationships.

A Drug Enforcement Agency Study

The last repeatedly cited example was a study conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration that found that “19 of the 44 groups that the U.S. Government has designated
as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) participate in the illegal drug trade and many also engage in financial and other forms of crime” (Luna). Several authors to highlight the fact that despite ideological motives and the potential for increased detection, terrorist organizations were participating in and profiting from the drug trade used this study. Additionally, many works noted the fact that this study only covers the drug trade, which leaves the involvement of these same terror organizations in other types of smuggling and illegal activity unknown, but suggests that it is equally as high.

The Attempted Assassination of the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia

A final commonality was the planned assassination of the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States, Adel al-Jubeir, in 2011. The plot, coordinated by members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, better known as the Quds Force, who lived in the U.S. included the assassination of the Ambassador and Bombing the Embassies for Saudi Arabia and Israel in Washington, D.C. In order to accomplish this while remaining undetected, the Quds members attempted to pay members of the Los Zetas drug cartel, to carry out the attacks and assassination.

Unbeknownst to the terrorists, the Zeta member they approached to arrange the contract was an undercover DEA agent. Before the cell members were arrested, they finalized the deal for the terror attacks, which included paying the Zetas $1.5 million (Rollins). This instance reiterates that differing motivations can be set aside in order to accomplish something that is mutually beneficial.

The Role of Globalization and the Fall of the Soviet Union

Several works mentioned the role globalization and the fall of the Soviet Union have had not only expansion of terrorism, crime, but also the convergence of the two seen in the crime-terror nexus. In Europe’s Crime-Terror Nexus: Links Between Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups in the European Union, it was stated that one of the byproducts of globalization has created a situation that facilitates nexus relationships “new immigration patterns are creating additional links between diaspora communities and ‘home-jurisdictions’ that facilitate the introduction of new illicit networks and new opportunities for linkages
between OC and terrorism to emerge” (European Parliament 15). The same publication also stated that globalization allowed terrorists to connect with other illicit actors whom they previously had little contact with as well as develop the network based structure that is seen today, which as previously discussed, allows for lower-level operatives to participate in criminal activity with little interference from a network’s leadership.

Louise A. Shelley and John T. Picarelli discussed that the necessary support functions a terrorist organization needs are direct results from globalization. In presenting this argument, the authors stated that a terrorist organization needs a safe-haven, usually an isolated, ungoverned area, in order to plan attacks and run the organization or cell. With the increased trade, travel, and communication that has been spurred by globalization, terrorists are able to “operate internationally by moving their commodities and finances across and through numerous countries” (307) from the safety of their hiding places. Shelley, in her separate work *The Unholy Trinity: Transnational Crime, Corruption, and Terrorism*, also stated that “globalization has marginalized and impoverished communities in the developing world, forcing them to engage in illicit activities to survive” (103), which only facilitates the creation of lawless and ungovernable lands in which these organizations flourish.

Additionally, the fall of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War has also created situations in which the crime-terror nexus thrives. The fall of the Soviet Union left power vacuums that the newly formed legitimate nations were unable to fill, which in turn created the ungoverned regions that foster terrorist and criminal safe-havens. The end of the Cold War also introduced a period of smaller, regionally based wars. As previously mentioned, the criminals and terrorists both thrive in areas of conflict, and both have vested interests in ensuring the continuance of those conflicts, and have been able to utilize these smaller wars to their advantage and establish themselves and expand their reach.

**CALLS FOR MORE RESEARCH**

Many works stated that the available research is insufficient to providing policy make, academic, and military figures with enough data on crime-terror nexus relationship, how they converge, to what extent, and how to combat them. As previously mentioned, one of the most outspoken works calling for more information was the "Expert Working Group Report on International Organized Crime”, published by the National Institute of Justice.
This report stated that “the group was largely disappointed with the research examining the links between IOC and terrorism” and that “one of the strongest recommendations was for more basic research detailing and cataloguing these relationship” (Picarelli 9).

**PROBLEMS FROM THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS AFTER 9/11**

As discussed previously, several works mentioned that one of the weak points nexus actors are taking advantage of may be the allocation of United States resources, including funding, agents, and other personnel, following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. *Organized Crime in the United States: Trends and Issues for Congress*, by Kristin Finklea, noted that the premier U.S. agency charged with the enforcement of organized crime is the FBI, who is also charged with investigating and preventing all terrorist actions that occur on American soil. This may have caused the agency to be stretched too thin, with too many objectives to properly patrol. The same work also looked at the shift in focus seen from all government institutions following 9/11, which has led the decreased number of criminal cases opened in response to organized crime. Failing to police one half of the nexus actors offers these organization a level of security has previously not been seen. This work, in agreement with several others, mentions that an appropriate action would be to assess the current distribution of resources and priorities within the FBI and other government agencies to ensure that potential opportunities for organized criminals, who may be working with or in conjunction with terrorists, do not go undetected and unprosecuted.

**JOURNAL SOURCE PATTERNS**

There was a distinct pattern in the source material seen within the academic and professional journals studied in this monograph. In addition to more than half of the works citing their own previous work as source material, there were several authors and works mentioned numerous times as support for other journals. Of the fifteen authors and sixteen works academic and professional journals studied, eight were cited in other articles: Chris Dishman, Tamara Makarenko, Louise A. Shelly and John T. Picarelli, Alex Schmidt, Phil Williams, Louise A. Shelly (independent of a co-author), Svante Cornell, and Wibke Hansen. Of these eight, all but Schmid, Cornell, and Hansen were cited by five or more of the studied works (not including their own).
Of these, Phil Williams was cited most frequently, with nine of the sixteen sources using his work as supporting evidence. This may seem drastic, but when looked at critically makes sense: Williams was the earliest of the works examined to be published, which occurred in 1994. Being one of the first authors writing about the crime-terror nexus, it is only natural that a considerably large portion of subsequent research used his work as a base for their arguments.

The remaining four authors were led by Makarenko, with eight citations, Dishman with seven, and both Shelley and Picarelli and Shelley, as an independent author, with five citations. While this tally is concerned only with the author being cited and not the specific work being cited, there is the potential for overlap: an author, having been cited by a newer publication, then uses this citation in their more recent works to support their new argument with essentially their old argument. This can lead to the reoccurrence and appearance of support for a topic or belief, which in actuality is the same argument just being resourced without any true supporting evidence. As seen in the previously analyzed publications, drastic shifts occur over time in crime-terror nexus literature, perpetuating previously analyzed ideas creates the possibility that false and outdated information is unknowingly replicated. This create situations where those charged with protecting our national security may be receiving incorrect information even if the source is recent. Because of this, the practice of routinely citing one’s own previously published information, particularly on a topic as dynamic and evolving as the crime-terror nexus, should be avoided.
CHAPTER 6

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE WORKS

The differences presented in these publications are much more indicative to the opposing opinions that plague the crime-terror nexus literature. These variances in opinion, stance, and evidence need to be explored in order to establish a uniform base for which to proceed.

DEFINITIONS AND WHAT CONSTITUTES NEXUS BEHAVIOR

One of the most foundational differences in nexus related research was in what type of actions from terrorists and criminals constituted as evidence of the crime-terror nexus. This was most commonly seen in sources either classifying nexus relationships solely as direct cooperation between organized criminals and terrorists, a viewpoint that severely limits known crime-terror nexus cases, or as any activity by one nexus component commonly associated with the other, the more universally accepted and comprehensive definition. While the vast majority of the works analyzed in this monograph include terrorist adopting criminal actions, most notably adapting “in-house” criminal components, as nexus related activity, the divide in what constitutes as evidence of a crime-terror nexus is drastic and deserves mention.

The largest impact of these differing opinions in what constitutes as crime-terror nexus activity was that it lead to separate authors citing the same events as evidence for opposing positions on the crime-terror nexus. This can be seen in Chris Dishman’s two works. In the earlier publication Dishman stated that nexus activity was highly unlikely because terrorist organizations would opt to create in-house criminal components and stating that in-house criminal components are examples of the crime-terror nexus in his 2005 publication "The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge". This is damaging to future research, as it presents later academics, military and government personnel, and journalists with differing research bases that cite the same situations but fundamentally contrast in their argument. This can lead to wasted publications, both of which trying to
examine the same issue, using the same sources and events to validate their argument, but coming to different conclusions.

**Differences in Threat Perception**

In addition to disagreeing on if the crime-terror nexus was an actuality and probability in the modern international security arena, publications also varied in whether they thought the nexus constituted a serious threat or not, and to what degree.

One work that stated that the crime-terror nexus is a threat to international security is the "FINAL REPORT: Trans-Atlantic Dialogue on Combating Crime - Terror Pipelines; Dismantling Converging Threat Networks to Strengthen Global Security", published by the National Defense University. This work stated that “as they converge, organized crime and terrorism will hobble economic growth in the long run because they present a structural problem” (10) within governments and societies. This finding illustrates that the authors of this piece identified the nexus as a clear and present danger to the international community.

Russell D. Howard and Colleen Traughber discussed in their work that several prominent members of the academic and intelligence communities do not believe that the nexus constitutes a threat to security. They stated that the reasons behind these findings include lack solid empirical evidence that the nexus is strengthening both entity and the belief that the two organizations will avoid working together whenever possible but will instead adopt the other’s tactics.

These conclusions raise several questions. While denying that the nexus poses a security threat, all of the works in this study agreed that terrorist organizations, perceived to be one of the largest current threats to international security, have adopted criminal tactics to ensure their survival. Consequently, should not anything that advances the longevity of these organizations equally pose a threat? In addition, does the direct participation, or alliance, of an organized criminal group make a nexus actor more dangerous than simply replicating their techniques?

**Importance of Motivation**

The most common argument stating that crime and terror organizations will remain separate entities and not ally with one another was their differing motivations. While some of
the authors studied stated that these differing objectives would inhibit cooperation, others did not perceive the two organization’s motivations as opposing or as a challenge to alliance.

Previously analyzed author Chris Dishman, in his 2001 work "Terrorism, Crime, and Transformation" strongly argues against convergence and cooperation, except in for short time when an organization is in need and does not have the capabilities or time to develop in-house criminal components. One of the reasons Dishman, and other authors, came to this conclusion was that terrorists wish to eradicate the existing government and social structure, which organized criminals are opposed to because they have developed the means and methods to derive profits and security from these existing power structures, and therefore it is in their best interests to ensure their survival.

What this argument assumes is that all organized criminals benefit from the current societal structure, which other authors stated is not necessarily the case. Louise A. Shelley, in her work "The Unholy Trinity: Transnational Crime, Corruption, and Terrorism", argued that there are distinct differences in older and new criminal syndicates. She state that while larger, traditional organized crime groups have grown to work and benefit within a society, and therefore have a vested interest in ensuring the status quo is uninterrupted, newer criminal organizations “often originating in post-conflict situations, thrive in a state of chaos and ongoing conflict” (101) that terrorists organizations provide. Since both organizations thrive in lawless, unstructured environments there is no motivational disadvantage to cooperating with terrorist organizations.

In this instance the inability for some researchers and authors to recognize that different organized criminal groups may or may not depend on the existing government institutions and social structures has led them to apply a restriction to an entire category that is composed of extremely diverse and situationally impacted set of actors, of which the only commonality is the drive for profits.

**ROLE OF ENVIRONMENT**

The majority of publications examined agree that the environments in which crime-terror nexus relationships thrive tend to be similar: post-conflict, minimal state influence and control, isolated. While some authors felt like this type of environment facilitated the growth
of terrorists and criminals, independent from or involved in the nexus, other felt like it was more of a correlation than a causation relationship.

One author who strongly felt that the environment of a region could predict the involvement of criminal or terrorist organizations was Susan E. Rice. In her work "The Threat of Global Poverty", Rice explains that societies with high poverty levels, who are more likely to accept criminal and terrorist groups as valid because they provided services the state could not, are more likely to facilitate not only the establishment of individual groups, but to also facilitate nexus relationships. This can occur through several means. States stricken by poverty often cannot provide the enforcement needed to ensure that illicit groups either do not form or are constrained from openly acting. Additionally, Rice states that the combination of poverty and state weakness “contributes indirectly but significantly to transnational anti-U.S. terrorism perpetrated by sub-state actors such as al Qaeda” (77). Finally, she stated that criminals actively seek out weak and failing states where “the climate for predatory transnational actors is improved exponentially” (78).

Contrary to Rice’s point, Wibke Hansen, in "The Failed State – Organized Crime – Terrorism Nexus", states that while there may be a propensity for nexus actors to establish themselves in failed or conflict ridden states, this tendency is merely a pattern and does not illustrate a fundamental relationship. Hansen supported this argument by citing several studies, one of which was conducted by Aidan Hehir, the Director of the Security and International Relations Programme at the University of Westminster, who found that the top twenty worst failed states, as characterized by the U.S. State Department, did not exhibit an abnormally high number of foreign terrorist operations, and that more than half did not have any at all. She adds that only six of the countries of the thirty-five listed “at risk” by the Failed State Index are designated as safe-havens for illicit actors. She further states that “weak states alone are clearly insufficient explanation for the presence of terrorist groups” (2).

Despite these differences, both authors believe that improvements in the strength of failing states and increasing the standard of living for individuals and families in poverty, without state assistance and the availability of social welfare programs would decrease the number of illicit actors in these nations.
CHAPTER 7
THE ROLE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN THE
CRIME-TERROR NEXUS

The role law enforcement is to play in combating the crime-terror nexus was discussed by many of the publications explored in this study. The viewpoint of an author regarding law enforcement often mirrored that author’s beliefs concerning other aspects of the nexus; if the author believed in the convergence or transformation of crime and terrorist organizations, that authors supported joint efforts in law enforcement; if they thought the nexus posed a threat, they supported increased international cooperation; if they believed that the nexus was not a strong likelihood, they did not suggest any changes to law enforcement.

Two of the works studied, "Operationalizing COIN" by Joseph Celeski and "Convergence: Special Operations Forces and Civilian Law Enforcement" by John B. Alexander, focused almost exclusively in discussing and examining potential law enforcement actions in countering the crime-terror nexus. Celeski discussed the potential opportunities nexus relationships offer law enforcement and the adjustments law enforcement must make in order to act upon them, calling for the “blending a form of transnational COIN (counter-insurgency) techniques with international and internal law enforcement measures” (27). This combination of military and international and domestic law enforcement provide expertise in a wide array of specialties, including counterterrorism, organized crime and counter-narcotics, evidence collection, as well as making information collected for a variety of sources with different agents and tactics available.

Alexander discussed the need for additional training for both military and law enforcement personnel in order to ensure they are adequately prepared for the evolving threats they face. In researching for his work, Alexander cites several personal and confidential interviews he had conducted with active military members who had returned from combat. In these interviews, it is made apparent that these individuals are being asked to perform functions they have not been taught how to execute. Many of these tasks are noted as being commonplace for local and federal law enforcement officers and agents, including
the collection of evidence and execution of a warrant. Alexander argued that as we legalized the “War on Terror,” our military needs to be adjusted accordingly.

Another area that saw considerable discussion was the prosecution of the increased criminal actions of terrorists as a means of removing them from the public. Daveed Gartenstein-Ross discussed this in his article "Terrorism Trends Old and New", comparing this strategy to the case of Al Capone, one of the best know mob members who, when authorities could not charge him on a slew of violent crimes, including murder, due to lack of evidence, they charged him with tax evasion. This tactic is also suggested by Russell D. Howard and Colleen Traughber in their publication, "The Nexus of Extremism and Trafficking: Scourge of the World or So Much Hype?", by stating that “it is easier to prosecute terrorists for criminal activities than for crimes of terrorism” noting that this method can “leverage existing resources and procedure” (42).

Howard and Traughber also discussed several other opportunities the crime-terror nexus presents to law enforcement. One is that criminals, profit motivated actors driven by self-interests, are much more likely to discuss the interworkings of a terrorist group or its actions in exchange for a more lenient sentence. They note the success of Lucky Luciano, a “Mafia kingpin,” who allegedly exchanged his knowledge of Nazi and Fascist spies for a reduced prison term. In addition, these authors also discuss use of undercover operatives to infiltrate criminal organizations working with terrorist groups in order to gain intelligence about their movements, leaders, undercover cells, and planned attacks. The use of undercover agents posing as criminals is much more successful than those posing as terrorists for several reasons, including the motivating principles behind the two entities: it is very hard to impersonate someone who is ideologically motivated because of the zealous nature that characterizes these individuals and the immense religious and cultural knowledge required.

The opportunity to use undercover law enforcement officers to combat the crime-terror nexus has already been effective, even if it was not the original goal. One of these cases can be seen in the previously examined attempted assassination plot on the Saudi Ambassador to the United States by the Iranian supported Quds Force. In this example, Quds terrorists approach and individual they believed to be a member of the Los Zetas drug cartel to arrange to pay the criminal group to conduct the assassination. Unbeknownst to the terrorists, the Zeta they approached was actually an undercover DEA agent, who was able to
relay the information about the planned attack and the cell in question back to the law enforcement agency, resulting in the prevention of the assassination and the prosecution of the terrorists.
CHAPTER 8

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite the immense amount of information contained in the works examined for this monograph, there were several aspects pertaining to the crime-terror nexus that were either omitted or mentioned briefly and not further explored or explained. These missing arguments present excellent examples of future research that would allow for a more complete understanding of these phenomena and the global situations from which they are derived.

WHAT FORM WOULD THE INTERNATIONAL/INTERAGENCY COOPERATION TAKE

One of the most universal recommendations across all of the analyzed publications includes increasing domestic and transnational cooperation as a means to combat and identify the crime-terror activity and actors. Apart from several works, how this level of interconnection among agencies that are inherently secretive and have vested interests in keeping information that is either damaging to themselves and their enemies private is to be accomplished is not discussed. In addition, of the works that did discuss how this could be achieved limited their discussion to mentioning several agencies or policies already in place, all of which have failed to prevent nexus activity.

This is a point that deserves significant research from a multitude of different institutions, including military, government, academic, and the public sphere. With domestic interagency cooperation and information sharing still an elusive goal for the American justice system, an international mechanism, whether it is an agreement between law enforcement agencies and governments, an independent international agency, or an addition to an existing international institution, needs to be thoroughly researched, developed, and tested. Any potential international information sharing instrument would need to take into account a variety of issues including: how nations would be included (membership, signee), agreed upon languages to be used (who would translate), how classified material was to be transferred, how jurisdictional differences would impact the court processes, establishing parameters for conditions in which information sharing was required, suggested, or
unnecessary, how long this information could/ should be stored, and potential punishments for not acting within agreed upon strictures.

The potential impact of an organization or arrangement that facilitated this level of cooperation could be drastic in assuring that law enforcement, military, and government officials receive the most complete and up to date information possible. This allows these individuals, charged with the protection of their respective countries and citizens, to respond proportionately to the threat posed and adequately to the current situation, giving them the highest likelihood of success.

ESTABLISHING APPLICABLE DEFINITIONS

As previously mentioned, several works were able to analyze the same events and come to opposing conclusions because the authors were using different definitions for what behavior is included and constitute the crime-terror nexus. While these discrepancies tended to be concentrated in earlier publications, an established definition is warranted in order to prevent future confusion and ensure that all future research is standardized. This definition should be established and agreed upon in an international setting to ensure that multiple perspectives are address and that regional differences do not become limiting factors.

The lack of an agreed upon definition for the crime-terror nexus is exacerbated by varying definitions used to identify organized crime, terrorists, and insurgents. To this day, statutory definitions for organized crime and terrorism have yet to be established. This confusion and potential for misunderstanding is again compounded by the different meanings applied to the word insurgent in the works studied. Several works used the term to apply to criminals operating in conjunction to a terrorist group while others used it to describe loosely affiliated terrorist operatives that may ally with organized criminals. These differences in meaning may have led to several of the differences in arguments examined in this study, including whether the nexus exists or is a possibility, what forms it may take, the importance of motivation, and the perceived threat of the nexus. Clarifying these points for future researchers and academics may help in centralizing the arguments surrounding the crime-terror nexus.
THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF CRIME AND TERRORISM TO A SOCIETY

It must be stated that one of the reasons that crime and terror have been able to continue despite immense law enforcement effort has been that they have the support of those around them, namely citizens that have no connection to illegal activity or corrupt governments. These illicit actors have been able to achieve this level of backing because they serve a function in the society in which they operate. This function occurs not only at the street level, but also among business, law enforcement, and military realms.

Several publications analyzed in this work mentioned the government roles terrorist and criminal organizations are able to fill in weak nations and failing states. These services included schools, health care, courts, and other basic needs. This creates appreciation and admiration among the citizens of these nations, which not only validates their ideological claims but create a “safe-haven” type of environment where the people of that area want to protect these networks in order to secure these services (Rice). These individuals then provide cover for terrorists and criminals, ensuring their longevity. This local support is essential in order for either group to function within a community, mainly because without this support citizens who do not support or believe in the ideological motivations of an organization will identify these actors to various law enforcement personnel.

It can also be stated that organize crime, and subsequently the terrorists that ally with criminal syndicates, fulfill a role within the context of the state government in which they operate in. This can be seen in the levels of corruption needed for many of these organizations to thrive within a given context. Nation-states have historically used criminals to fulfill needed functions that a state was unwilling or unable to accommodate themselves. An example of this can be seen in the letters of marque empires such as England and France would award to pirates, essentially clearing them of all crimes in the understanding they would then go and attack ships belonging to enemy or competitor nations.
The crime-terror nexus continues to be an evolving reality. This threat however fails to be properly understood or properly defended against because of the lack of universal agreement within the research examining it. The differences seen in the works examined illustrate the wide range of thoughts on the nature, potential impact, and danger posed by the crime-terror nexus. Organized criminals, terrorists, and the networks that blur the lines between the two currently distinct categories, will continue to adapt and strengthen. In order to properly protect the American people, those charged with defending and informing the public must not only being to notice these foundational differences in what the crime-terror nexus is, what it does, and what it means, but come begin to establish universally accepted ideas based on the most recent and accurate information available.

As seen in the works analyzed, there is little agreement in what constitutes as crime-terror nexus activity, the threat it may or may not pose, and if the nexus is a reality, what form it would take. These differences were seen throughout the study, particularly when the works were examined based on the date of publication and the type of organization composing the piece, even when examining works by the same authors. This lack of consistency led to several authors viewing the same event and coming to completely different conclusions nexus involvement. This is not to say that differing opinions in research is inherently negative, with many new truth only coming to light through the examinations of conflicting arguments, but rather that the older, false information that continues to be perpetuated in this literature base must be eradicated in order for efficient and effective research to continue. These earlier, misguided statements and publications must be labeled as such to avoid future authors from being persuaded by the arguments contained within them.

Many authors studied for this thesis analyzed traits seen in terrorist or criminal behavior as absolute: either the characteristic exemplified a criminal network or a terrorist network unconditionally. This is seen in several works believing in the transformation theory: that the criminal or terrorist organization is using tactics typically associated with the
other, not in the means of advancing their current beliefs, but rather simply because they are changing into the other. While this, in rare cases, maybe the case it certainly is not an outright transition, and typifying it as such creates situations where those charge with national security are given information obscured by theoretical fallacy.

These organizations have to be seen as rational actors capable of making a variety of choices for an infinite number of reasons. To define a social networks in unwavering terms will result in categorical issues: it is very unlikely that an organization that is large enough and dynamic enough to threaten a society will fit exactly into prearranged parameters. This is the very reason why there are no universally accepted definitions of terrorism, crime, or gang. In order to advance beyond the arguments and misconceptions these simple labels used to identify the type of organization raise, those examining them must agree that there is a wide array of activities involved that may or may not be indicative of criminal/terrorist behavior. The main objective of the union must be examined and hold more relevance than the sum of its parts. Aligned with this train of thought, the criminal activities used by terrorist organizations must be considered as a method of perpetuating their idealistic, political motivations, as must the terror tactics used by organized criminals be viewed as means of supporting their profit minded drives.

The value of this thesis is that it presents a representative study of where the literary differences pertaining to the crime-terror nexus occur up to the spring of 2014. With this information available, future researchers can comprehensively view these publications and make deductions based on these systematically analyzed works. This would allow these authors the ability to utilize the findings of previous research that is still applicable or address the earlier theories on the crime-terror nexus. This thesis is important to these researchers because it catalogued the differences seen in a total of fifty-two publications written in a twenty year time frame in order to facilitate a more unified research base from this point forward. If these contrary conclusions continue to persist in these pieces of literature, the information given to our policy makers, military leaders, and law enforcement personnel will be misrepresentative of the reality of the threat posed by the crime-terror nexus. For those charged with ensuring the national security of our country require accurate, current, and thorough data to guarantee the correct and appropriate actions are taken.
Despite the importance of this thesis, there are several limitations to the information that was collected for its study and the deductions made within it. One of the limitations is that only unclassified and publically available material was examined. This limits the scope of the study because, theoretically, the most current information is most likely either classified or has yet to be released, creating a delay in the accuracy of the material examined. Additionally, there can be older information that is still classified or not yet released to the public that may contain information that may either align with some of the theories and conclusions discussed in this thesis, or it may present completely new data on the crime-terror nexus that was seen in the fifty-two works analyzed.

Another limitation is that my own personal deductions as to why the trends pertaining to the crime-terror nexus data changed is speculation based on the available research. An example of this is Chris Dishman’s drastic change in stance between his 2001 and 2005 publications. While my conclusion that the transformation seen is based on new research becoming available and the crime-terror nexus, as a theory, gaining legitimacy, Dishman does not explain, or even mention, the differences between his two publications. While I believe that all of my conclusion are correct deductions based on the shifting perceptions following major events are correct, they are not substantiated by the examined authors or works.

As the crime-terror nexus continues to evolve into a more complex reality, and the criminal and terrorist organizations involved become stronger and more resilient, it is of utmost importance that national security personnel, members of the intelligence community, and policy makers are presented with the most accurate and up to date information possible. This thesis has attempted to aid this effort by analyzing a representative study of previous research in order to identify trends, patterns, and common fallacies to ensure that any misinformation does not continue to plague this topic.
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