

All for One, or One for All: A Comparative Evaluation of the Role of Social Relations in Explaining Individual versus Group Participation in the Radicalization and Terrorism Process amongst Far-Right Actors in the United States

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Abstract : This paper explores the role of social relations in explaining far-right actors' decisions over whether to travel down the process of radicalization and terrorism alone or in a group. To this end, a joint comparative method of difference and agreement is applied to four case studies across key temporal points on the radicalization and terrorism pathway to generate a theory of why individuals decide to radicalize and/or act alone or within a group. While social relations are identified as playing some moderate role in explaining why certain individuals radicalize alone versus within a group, this paper argues they play a significant role in affecting decisions over whether to act alone versus in a group. These findings suggest new avenues of distinction and understanding of far-right actors' processes of radicalization and terrorism, in turn, offering potential new avenues for counter-terrorism policy and important areas for future research.

Keywords : far-right, lone-actor, terrorism, United States, radicalization

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