

*This seminar was funded and supported by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate Office of University Programs through the Center for Borders, Trade, and Immigration Research under Grant Award Number DHS-14-ST-061-COE-00. The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as necessarily as representing the official policies, either expressed or implied, of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, or any office of the United States Government.*

The U. S. Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence, Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate Center of Excellence through the Center for Borders, Trade, and Immigration Research, held a Homeland Security Symposium titled: **“Gangs, Terrorism, and Radicalization.”** This symposium was a two-part conversation on the important similarities and differences across criminal, deviant, and extremist groups. In addition, the presenter discussed the current state of the field, as well as possible future applications and prospects.

## **Instructor Biography**

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### *Dr. Scott H. Decker – Arizona State University*

Scott Decker earned his PhD in Criminology from Florida State University. He is Foundation Professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University. His main research interests are in the areas of gangs, violence, and criminal justice policy. He is a Fellow in both the American Society of Criminology and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. He is the author of seventeen books and over 120 scientific articles. His books include, *Life in the Gang: Family, Friends and Violence* (Cambridge, 1996), *Confronting Gangs: Crime and Community* (Oxford, 2015), and *Policing Immigrants: Local Law Enforcement on the Front Lines* (University of Chicago, 2016). Decker recently completed a study funded by the National Institute of Justice that examines the role of race/ethnicity, gender and a prison sentence on employment chances. He is engaged in a study of the use of technology by offenders funded by *Google Ideas*. He served as an adviser or consultant to the National Institute of Justice, National Science Foundation, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Office of National Drug Control Policy. Professor Decker served as a Member of the Missouri Sentencing Commission for ten years and as a member of the Arizona POST Board for five years. He is an active and contributing member of the Eurogang Research Group. He testified before the President's Task Force on 20<sup>th</sup> Century Policing.

## **Topics Covered**

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1. Introduction to the research
2. The gangs/terrorist overlap
3. Responding to gangs and terrorist groups

## **Analysis of Symposium Feedback**

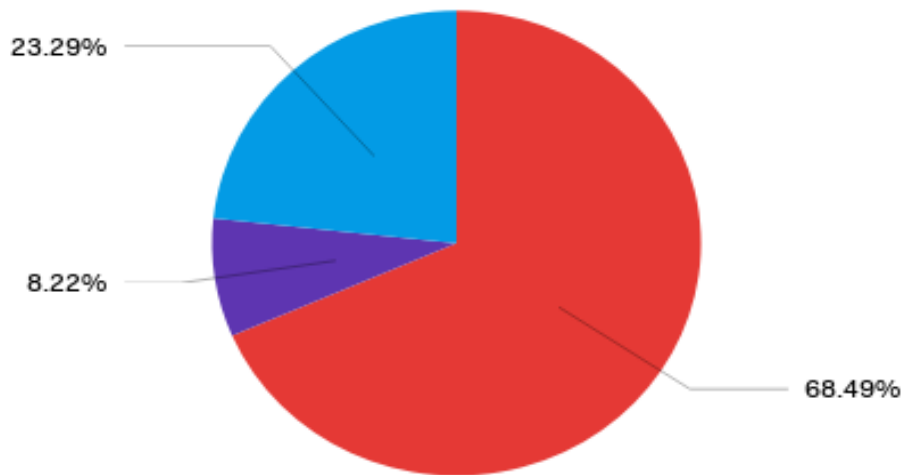
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The symposium was well-attended with a total of:

- **93 Confirmed RSVPs**
- 79 Attendees (Approximately **85%** of RSVP total)

A total of 15 government agencies organization was represented by the symposium attendees. Attendees from New Mexico and Texas attended this event. This symposium afforded particular attention to participants with gang intervention responsibilities. The following table displays each of the agencies/organizations with the total number of representatives in attendance.

Federal Agencies		State Agencies	
ICE Homeland Security Investigations	13	UTEP (Police Department)	01
ICE Enforcement & Removal Operations	01	Texas Department of Public Safety	01
CBP - Office of Border Patrol – EPT Sector	18	UTEP	03
CBP - Office of Field Operations	06		
DHS Intelligence & Analysis	02		
U.S. Marshalls Office	01		
El Paso Intelligence Center	06		
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, & Explosives	03		
Drug Enforcement Agency	01		
Dept. of Justice (non-specified)	01		
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>04</b>
Local Agencies		Other	
El Paso Police Department	11	Congressman O’Rourke’s District Director	01
El Paso County Sheriff’s Department	10	Non-specified	01
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>02</b>

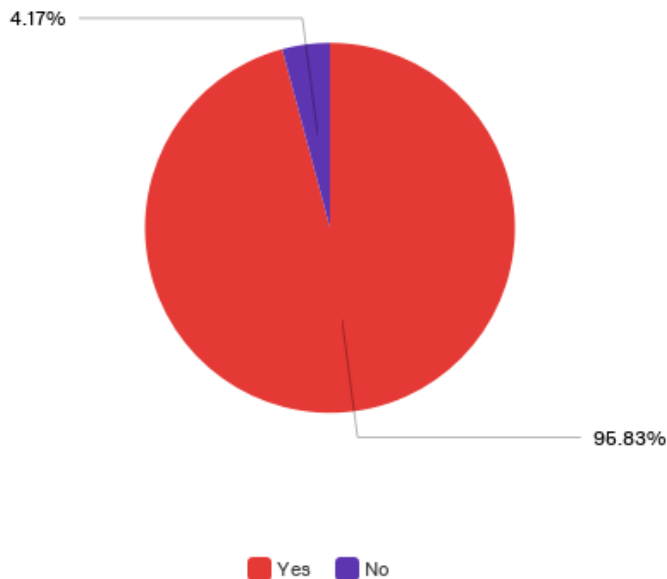


■ Federal Agency   
 ■ State Agency   
 ■ Local Agency   
 ■ Tribal Government

Every attendee was asked to fill out a symposium evaluation. A total of 74 surveys (94% of total attendees) were submitted. Overall, the assessment feedback was overwhelmingly positive (listed percentages are the sum of both the “agree” and “strongly agree” percentages):

The seminar met my expectations	82.4%
The overall topics covered in this seminar were relevant and useful to my current assignment	79.7%
The seminar description accurately described the seminar content	86.5%
The seminar increased my <b>knowledge</b> of the subject matter	85.1%
The seminar increased my <b>interest</b> of the subject matter	87.8%
The overall quality of this seminar was excellent	91.6%
The instructors’ presentation style was effective	90.5%

The exit survey also contained the following question (Q3): Would you attend a second more in-depth symposium on this topic? The survey revealed that **95.8%** of the symposium participants would attend a second more in-depth symposium.



Open-attended responses indicated a common satisfaction with the course with particularly positive comments regarding the competence of the instructor and the content’s utility and pertinence to their field of work. The following questions were asked in the exit survey and no edits have been made to the comments with the exception of spelling.

*Q4. What other topic/subject matter would you like to see presented in similar seminars, tabletop exercises or practicums?*

- Understanding social media, technology, and smartphones to find criminals. Topics more relevant to law enforcement invest (crime scene).
- Gangs and Transnational Organized Crime Money Laundering.
- Discussion on community interventions that's have been tried in communities, whether effective or not.
- Dr. Decker has done countless interviews of gang members. I believe interviewing is one of the most important tasks in policing. Having said that, it would be nice to hear advice and/or avenues to effectively

interview gang members/ radicals. El Paso is a unique city, including smaller gangs (possibly small due to the lack of rivalries), but mostly deal with Trans-national gangs (cartels). It would have been helpful to learn more about how the cartels have evolved and the relationship they share to gangs/ terrorists/ radicalization.

- Different types of gang involvement from other countries
- In depth of terrorism topics. Recruitment of military personnel for gangs.
- Modern issues in community policing towards increasing officer safety.
- Cartel command and control
- Cartel competition/ rivalry in Juarez, and how it affects El Paso AOR.
- Organized Crime, local gangs, U.S. Military and Gangs
- Terrorism/ Counterterrorism tactics, detection, and prevention. Terrorism employing gangs as recruitment tool. Terrorism employing gangs as an immigration tool.
- Cyber Tech Social Media
- The influence of gangs in the current cartel structure and possibilities of terrorist connections.
- Gangs Immigration
- Gangs associated with DTO's, the similarities of executions and extreme executions. For example the use of be-headings.
- Effects of drugs on normal civilians and how usage of drugs contributes to gangs/terrorism.
- Human Smuggling/ migration and connections to organized crime
- Investigative Techniques
- The diversification of local gangs within the criminal world.
- More coverage on how gangs make markings such as tattoos, signs, grouping.
- Active Shooter Presentation.
- Political asylum and effect on crime in bad community.

*Q5. If there are any additional comments you have about the seminar topics covered please provide them below.*

- Excellent presentation by Dr. Decker.
- For this particular symposium I would've enjoyed more in-depth lecture or additional speakers.
- Great symposium!
- Being forever students, the symposium was great. Any opportunity to learn anything new is priceless.
- Thanks for instructions and handouts. First time at UTEP. Easy to find and get to conference.
- Great presentation but it would be better to present a more local approach to border issues.
- This symposium, I feel, never met the goal of showing us the link between gangs, terrorism, and radicalization. I thought they would show more of a correlation than what was presented. Great speaker though.
- Great class!
- Great presentation. Keep up the great work!

## **Webcast Analytics**

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This symposium was the third effort to add a webcast feature as part of the value added deliverable of this program. In addition, this was the second effort to place the symposium video on our website and YouTube account to enhance future viewings of the symposium series. The PI will continue with simultaneous webcast broadcasting of the symposium series with efforts to increase viewership through this medium.

**Total views:** 18

**Total shares:** 1

**Geo-locations:** California, District of Columbia, New Mexico, Texas, and Sweden

## Symposium Series Visibility

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In an effort to promote the symposium series and the work of the Center for Borders, Trade and Immigration Research (CBTIR) we have actively engaged on Twitter and local news media outlets.

- There were eight (8) tweets that were sent just prior, during, and just after the symposium event. The tweets received a total of **1,644** impressions. The number of impressions reflects **18.1%** of the total Twitter impressions of the Center for Law & Human Behavior's Twitter account.
- Although local news stations KFOX, KVIA (ABC), UNIVISION, and KTSM (NBC) filmed extensively and interviewed the PI and Dr. Decker, no actual news footage could be found on their respective websites.

## Learning

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Every attendee was asked to take a six (6) question Pretest Questionnaire in order to gauge the level of understanding of the topic. In addition, the participants were asked to take the same six (6) question Posttest Questionnaire at the conclusion of the symposium. The first question asked of the participant was to self-measure their level of knowledge on the topic on a 1 to 10 scale with 1 as *No Knowledgeable* and 10 as *Very Knowledgeable*. A total of 74 pretests/posttests (94% of total attendees) were returned by the participants.

*Analysis:* Self-evaluation by the participants indicated a **10% increase** in learning. The average Pretest Questionnaire score was **71%** and the average Posttest Questionnaire score was **92%**. The results of the Pretest and Posttest Questionnaires revealed a **21% increase** in learning.

## Lessons Learned

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As part of the program's self-evaluation process the following areas will be addressed:

- Seek the assistance of the Homeland Security Symposium Series Advisory Board in achieving a higher rate of return for both the Exit Surveys and Pretest and Posttest Questionnaires.
- Continue to emphasize to symposium participants the importance of the Exit Surveys and Pretest and Posttest Questionnaires.
- Harvesting more precise information of webcast participation is currently being addressed.
- The number of actual participants fell well below the number of RSVPs. Seek the assistance of the Homeland Security Symposium Series Advisory Board to ensure that their agency RSVPs actually attend the symposium.

## Acknowledgements

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The Principle Investigator, Victor M. Manjarrez, Jr., would like to acknowledge the efforts of Center for Human & Behavior's Manager Leonora Ortega-Martinez. In addition, the hard work, diligence, and "can-do" attitude of undergraduate research assistants Ms. Monica Diaz, Ms. Anjelica Manjarrez, and Mr. Steven Rios helped make this symposium a success. Finally, the work by UTEP's Academic Technologies Associate Director Steve Varela and Adrian Meza is simply second to none.

*Victor M. Manjarrez, Jr.*

*August 18, 2016*

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Date