



Research on Domestic Radicalization to Violent Extremism: Insights from Family and Friends of Current and Former Extremists



Presented by
Dr. Ryan A. Brown and Dr. Todd C. Helmus

RSVP Soon!

You must RSVP to receive a parking permit.

RSVP Information

When: Thursday, August 11, 2022

Time: 9:00AM – 12:00PM

Where: The University of Texas at El Paso
Blumberg Auditorium (UTEP Library)

RSVP Deadline: Friday, August 5, 2022

Entrance Fee: No attendance fee is associated with this symposium.

How to Register

To RSVP for this event register online at <https://utep.questionpro.com/t/APK72ZtIff> or use the QR code!

For more information regarding this event, contact Dr. Victor M. Manjarrez, Jr. at vmmanjarrez@utep.edu

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About this Symposium

Terrorism and ideologically inspired violence represent persistent and serious threats to U.S. national security. The January 6, 2021, attack at the U.S. Capitol and other recent events emphasize the need for more research to inform prevention and deradicalization strategies. To address this need, a team from the RAND Corporation sought to characterize why and how individuals joined extremist organizations, as well as how some of them exited these groups. The team conducted semi-structured interviews with former extremists and their family members, representing 32 unique stories of 24 white supremacists and eight Islamic extremists.

Exposure to propaganda on the internet, in music, and in books and literature was present in more than two-thirds of the sample. Although formal, top-down recruitment occurred for three Islamic extremists, the majority of white supremacists actively sought out participation in extremist organizations. Among the sample, 26 had exited the organizations; of those, six were still undergoing cognitive and emotional deradicalization. Among those who exited, 22 mentioned that a person or group intervened to help them by providing diverse cultural and demographic exposures, emotional support, financial stability, or domestic stability.

Interviewees also addressed such systemic issues as unemployment and the need for more-affordable and easily accessible mental health care. These interviews led to recommendations for both research and practice that emphasize the importance of incorporating the voices of those with personal experience and knowledge of ideological extremism into future research designs and efforts to prevent radicalization and promote deradicalization.

This symposium is funded by the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention presented to you by The University of Texas at El Paso's REACH (Resilience, Education, Action, Commitment, and Humanity) Program.

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