You are cordially invited to attend the Center for Intelligence and Security Research Seminar Series

Dr. Michael Kenney
Friday, February 22, 2019 at 12:30 p.m.

UTEP Union Building – University Suite

The Islamic State in Britain: Radicalization and Resilience in an Activist Network

Drawing on extensive field research with activists on the streets of London, Michael Kenney provides the first ethnographic study of a European network implicated in terrorist attacks and sending fighters to the Islamic State. For over twenty years, al-Muhajiroun (Arabic for ‘the Emigrants’) strived to create an Islamic state in Britain through high-risk activism. A number of Emigrants engaged in violence, while others joined the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. Kenney explains why young Britons joined the Emigrants, how they radicalized and adapted their activism, and why many of them eventually left. Through an innovative mix of ethnography and network analysis, Kenney explains the structure and processes behind this outlawed network and explores its remarkable resilience. What emerges is a complex, nuanced portrait that demystifies the Emigrants while challenging conventional wisdom on radicalization and countering violent extremism.

Michael Kenney is associate professor and program director of international affairs at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh. He is the author of From Pablo to Osama: Trafficking and Terrorist Networks, Government Bureaucracies, and Competitive Adaptation and the co-editor of Organizational Learning in the Global Context. Dr. Kenney has published numerous academic journal articles on terrorism, Islamist militancy, and transnational organized crime in Survival, Orbis, Terrorism and Political Violence, Global Crime, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, and the Journal of Conflict Resolution, among other publications. He also serves on the editorial board of Terrorism and Political Violence, a leading journal in the field. He has also conducted field research in Brazil, Colombia, Israel, Morocco, and Spain and held research fellowships at Stanford University and the University of Southern California. His research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, the Office of Naval Research, and the National Institute of Justice, among other institutions. He received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Florida. Prior to earning his doctorate, he was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ecuador, South America, and an Americorps Volunteer in Orlando, Florida.

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