THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN COUNTERTERRORISM

BY MICHAEL NEWELL

MAXWELL SCHOOL OF CITIZENSHIP AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

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By Michael Newell, Ph.D. Candidate

Department of Political Science

Syracuse University Maxwell School
of Citizenship and Public Affairs

Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism

Andrew Berlin Family National Security Fund

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Introduction

While much attention has been paid to the American state's reaction to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, the origins of institutions and ideas deployed in the War on Terror in historical conceptions of terrorism and political violence have been overlooked.[1] In this paper, I analyze these historical origins through the American state's response to Ku Klux Klan (KKK), Irish-American Fenian, and anarchist political violence from the end of the Civil War in 1865 until the 1920 bombing of Wall Street, the last alleged significant act of anarchist violence. I argue that this history demonstrates a process of threat construction and changes in institutions, laws, and policies. These changes came about through a mixture of complex social and political factors, but the perception of threat significantly influenced their content and the populations they were directed against. This was particularly the case in the state's response to European anarchists, in which the response could be described as against an "inflated" perception of threat, while the response to the KKK and Irish-American Fenians was more constrained. I argue that this difference is the result of the discursive association of threat with generalized social and political categories, including identity (race, class, gender, nationality, religion, etc.) and ideology (anarchist, communist, socialist, conservative, etc.).

Throughout its history, American counterterrorism has been based on the logic of excluding allegedly threatening populations, and this logic has tended to follow the lines of social and political identity. As such, ideas about American identity and legitimate engagement in American social and political life have structured conceptions of social deviance and illegitimate violence. For example, in the late 1800s anarchist violence was often described as an import from Europe, while "native-born white Americans who commit acts of political violence [were] usually treated as misguided individuals."[2] The consequence of the perceived foreignness of terrorists can be seen in the fates of Emma Goldman in the early 1900s, an anarchist and a US citizen, and Anwar al-Awlaki in the 2000s, an alleged leader of al Qaeda and also a US citizen. While both Goldman and al-Awlaki were US citizens, their designation as "terrorists" placed them outside of the rights and protections of citizenship. Consequently, Goldman was deported to Russia after living in the US for 35 years, and al-Awlaki was killed by a drone strike.

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[1] While historical analyses are the exception to this—for example, see Green 2006, Gage 2009, Messer-Krusse 2012, Kassel 2009, Renshaw 1968, Barton 2015, Jensen 2014, Simon 2008, and Thorup 2008 (anarchist actions), Jenkins 2008, Gantt 2010, Whelehan 2012, Steward and Mcgovern 2013 (Irish-American Fenians), Rapoport 2008, Chalmers 1981 and Wade 1998 (KKK)—political science, terrorism studies, and security studies have not yet paid significant attention to this history (some exceptions include Rappoport 2011 and Aydinli 2008).

[2] Gage 2011: 92.

The history of American counterterrorism not only holds a mirror up to events today, it also demonstrates the profound, long-term effects that threat construction and inflation can have when they become institutionalized. In its reaction to these groups' use of political violence from the mid-19th century through the 1920s, America's federal security institutions developed from non-existence to national and international influence. By the end of World War I, the US Secret Service, Bureau of Immigration, and Bureau of Investigation, among other agencies, were created and expanded to national and international influence. While the explanation for the creation of these institutions includes a number of factors—such as the rising bureaucratization of the federal government—political violence and perceptions of insecurity played a central role.

The broader dissertation project of which this paper is a small part seeks to understand the processes of threat construction, threat inflation, and security responses through a history of American experiences with terrorism and counterterrorism. In this paper, I illustrate my approach through the law, policy, and institutional changes enacted after the assassination of President William McKinley in 1901— ostensibly by a European anarchist—including immigration restrictions on those espousing anarchist philosophies. As the assassin, Leon Czolgosz, had only tenuous connections to the anarchists and was a US citizen born to Polish immigrants, I argue that the particular response to this assassination (including substantial changes to immigration laws, presidential protection, and the role of the Secret Service) and its particular focus (on immigrants, despite Czolgosz's citizenship) illustrate the impact that ideas have on deciding who or what is a source of insecurity. Likewise, this case provides an example of identity-based threat inflation, as violence by a few individuals with ties to anarchism strengthened policies against anarchists, immigrants, socialists, communists, labor, and feminists. This identity-based threat inflation, once institutionalized, affected social and political life after the threat of anarchist terrorism waned.

Threat Construction, Inflation, & Response

What Are Security Threats?

Threats constitute the core of much that occurs in the study and practice of security, but it remains unclear exactly how much we know about them. In one example, Buzan conceptualized threats in terms of their security sector (i.e., military, economic, social, political, and environmental), source, intensity, and change over time. However, in concluding, Buzan admitted that the complexity and malleability of threats still makes them ambiguous at best, and a source of political posturing, confusion,

arms races, and proliferating insecurity at worst.[3] Since Buzan's study, scholarship on threats has expanded to include perceived intentions, offensive capabilities, identities, discourses, and more. Through these various contributions, two general approaches to conceptualizing "threat" can be identified: threat perceptions and threat constructions.[4] In considering these two general approaches, it becomes clear that there are stark ontological divisions in the study of threats. On one hand, threats are objective characteristics of reality that can be either perceived or misperceived. On the other, threats are intersubjective constructions that are based on human agents' interpretations of their reality. Together, threats are either natural or artificial.[5] This distinction can be significant, particularly when threats become the impetus for expansive security institutions.[6]

Social constructivism provides a useful basis for this analysis as it accounts for both objective and intersubjective features of threats. A primary contribution to constructivist analysis of security threats comes from securitization theory. McDonald defines securitization as "the positioning through speech acts (usually by a political leader) of a particular issue as a threat to survival, which in turn (with the consent of the relevant constituency) enables emergency measures and the suspension of 'normal politics' in dealing with that issue."[7] Other approaches to securitization have argued that it has three main components: political agency, the audience of the speech act, and context.[8] Constructivist contributions

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[3] Buzan 2008: 89-90.

[4] Threat perceptions can be defined as the observation of sources of potential harm to an individual or group. This approach is generally associated with realist (and its variants) theories of security and with strategic studies. Threat constructions can be defined as the social production of the sources of potential harm to an individual or group. Constructivist approaches to security, particularly securitization theory, are associated with this perspective. Despite considering factors associated with both approaches, here I take up the label of "threat construction" for the following reasons. First, associating this approach with constructivism provides a theoretical basis that is predisposed to process-based explanations. Constructivist and other related social theories assume that social and political power operates through relationships, and that interactions and processes are significant in the study of social and political phenomena (e.g., see Klotz and Lynch 2007: 11). Second, describing this process in other ways (e.g., threat identification, perception, recognition, creation, and so on) either inaccurately suggests the threat exists independently of this process (identification, perception, and recognition) or suggests that threats are entirely artificial (creation).

[5] For a similar distinction of objective and subject threats, see He 2012 (173) and Rousseau 2006.

[6] For example, one criticism of critical terrorism studies (Jones and Smith 2009: 299), a perspective that argues that terrorism is a social construction, accuses it of exploiting an "oughtistic" style of thinking (presumably intentionally playing off of the medical term "autistic") that leads to "a Humpty Dumpty world" where words mean whatever the critical theorist chooses them to mean. This distinction of natural or artificial threats also has important implications for counterterrorist policies. While al Qaeda and ISIS may clearly fit the description, the inclusion of Nelson Mandela on the US list of terrorists through 2008 calls into question who or what is perceived (or constructed) to be a threat.

[7] McDonald 2008. See also Williams 2003 and Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde 1997.

[8] Balzacq 2005. In considering the role of context, critics of the earlier articulations of securitization theory have argued that its account of speech acts lent them too much analytical weight, and that their discursive and institutional context determines their success or failure. For a discussion of discursive context, see Stritzel 2007 and Ciuta 2009. For a discussion of institutional context, see Bigo and Guittet 2011.

outside of securitization theory reflect these basic concerns.[9] Combing both elements of agency and context, Weldes and Weldes et. al. conceptualized the security actions of a state in terms of its "security imaginary," or "a structure of well-established meanings and social relations out of which representations of the world of international relations are created."[10] In this approach, the constitution of a thing, person, or group as a threat is tied to widely held understandings in the social and political context of security.

However, constructivist accounts posit a problem for security responses. Here, objective bases of insecurity are subsumed by elite, institutional, or discursive interpretations, making threats a social fact. This form of subjectivism suggests that the possibility for misinterpretation is present in the response to any given threat. This misinterpretation could go in either direction: either threats could be overlooked or they could be overwrought. The latter possibility has spurred the development of a literature concerned with "threat inflation." While threat inflation is not particular to constructivism, this type of escalation is often assumed in securitization theory. Critics of securitization argue that it has a normative cast that favors desecuritization, or a move away from the politics of security in order to manage problems, because it assumes that security politics are excessive. As Williams argues, security "is something to be invoked with great care and, in general, minimized …" for the sake of "stability, tolerance, and political negotiation."[11]

What is Threat Inflation?

Threat inflation presumes a mismatch between the objective assessment of the harm posed by a particular threat and the intersubjective ideas that constitute widespread understandings of it. Cramer and Thrall define threat inflation as "the attempt by elites to create concern for a threat that goes beyond the scope and urgency that a disinterested analysis would justify."[12] Beyond this, their volume investigates questions of why and how: why do elites manipulate threats and how do they successfully influence public opinion to this end? In answer, they advance three primary explanations based on psychology, domestic politics, and constructivist factors, including social identity and context.[13] Mueller provides a

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[9] See, for example, Mitzen 2006 and Katzenstein 1996.

[10] Weldes 1999: 10. See also, Weldes, Laffey, Gusterson and Duvall 1999.

[11] Williams 2003: 523.

[12] Cramer and Thrall 2009: 1.

[13] Thrall and Cramer 2009. In addition, threat inflation also has been attributed to the media environment (Gadarian 2010), political rhetoric (Gershkof and Kushner 2005), intelligence failures (Mitzen and Schweller 2011), and intentional elite manipulation of threats (Jackson 2005). For further discussion of psychological or cognitive explanations, see Mueller 2005, 2006 and Mueller and Stewart 2012. For critiques of Mueller, see the debate between Mueller 2007a, Betts 2007, Byman 2007, Crenshaw 2007, and Mueller 2007b.

psychological explanation for threat inflation based in cognitive biases. In this account, individuals perceive terrorism as more threatening than it objectively is because they inflate the probability that rare or unlikely events will occur, which Mueller relates to the significantly higher deaths as a result of traffic accidents compared to the significantly higher expenditure on terrorism.[14] Rousseau and Garcia-Retamero take up the constructivist perspective in this volume, demonstrating through experimental data that individuals react to threats from both realist and constructivist premises. They argue that individuals use social identity cues, including information about themselves and also about potential threatening groups or individuals, in order to assess threats.[15]

These approaches to threat inflation leave two main concerns unaddressed: how do we know a threat is or is not inflated and how do we explain when and why particular groups or individuals are seen as threats? This first concern relates to the necessity of conceptualizing a measurement of the inflation of a threat. The second infers the need to better understand two concurrent processes: the social construction of threat and identity and the decision-making and agency of security officials and institutions. I propose a qualitative metric for threat inflation based in discursive association. Here, threat inflation is an analytical distinction based upon the number of groups, identities, individuals, ideologies, and so on that are categorized as part of a threatening phenomenon through speech, media, and other forms of social and political discourse. One example from this research includes the role of social biases—including xenophobic, class-based, religious, nationalist, and gender-based prejudices—in associating immigrants, labor activists, feminists, and southern and eastern Europeans with the threat of anarchist violence.

How do Threats Affect Laws, Policies, & Institutions?

The ideal objective of a security response is to remove the insecurity posed by a threat through the implementation, alteration, or creation of laws, policies, and institutions. However, whether or not security responses actually meet this ideal is a subject of disagreement. For example, while prescriptive accounts found in strategic studies attempt to identify a purely functional connection between cause (security response) and intended effect (removal of threat), rationalist approaches posit that uncertainty and political interests—including relative power, autonomy, and so on—will move reality away from this

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[14] Mueller 2006; Mueller 2009.

[15] Rousseau and Garcia-Retamero 2009.

ideal.[16] Furthermore, both of these perspectives assume that security responses are primarily driven by the character of the threat, but that relationship becomes problematic once we conceptualize threats as the product of a complex social and political process. For example, McSweeney argues that security responses are conditioned by "the social world we inhabit; our security policy is a choice we make among options" that is "limited by history … but always entailing human agency and choice."[17]

Security responses can have a significant impact on social and political life. According to the literature on war and state formation, these responses have been a core driver of the formation of modern state institutions. The decisions state elites made in an effort to overcome external competition or internal enemies led to new state institutions, increased state administrative capacity, increased state wealth, and increased power of state militaries, among other outcomes.[18] In the American case, Saldin finds that wars throughout the 1900s altered party politics, tax revenue, and social and political rights, while Kroenig and Stowsky find that the War on Terror of the 2000s has led to new or altered institutions, but mediated by the constraining effects of institutional checks and balances.[19]

However, while the effects on social and political rights that Saldin identifies are positive developments, focusing mostly on "the extension of full citizenship and civil rights to previously marginalized minority groups that contribute to a war effort," this is not always the case.[20] As Smith found in his analysis of citizenship rights, generally speaking the history of these rights is a mixture of expansions and contractions, and this becomes clear when analyzing the effects of security and insecurity on American political institutions.[21] While wars may have led to the inclusion of new groups, wars and instances of insecurity in general also have led to the identification of threatening groups who are then placed outside of these protections. While not necessarily the case, this process poses the risk of institutionalizing prejudice and other forms of social bias when responding to identity-based threat inflation. As the following case demonstrates, the process of threat construction before and after McKinley's 1901 assassination led to an inflated threat that grouped anarchists, European migrants,

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[16] For example, Walt's (1985) explanation of state behavior when faced with a threat identifies "balancing" or "bandwagoning" as the expected responses, based upon the threat and interests in relative power and autonomy. For further discussion of the differences of rationalist and functionalist approaches to security, see Gartzke 1999: 568.

[17] McSweeney 2004: 11.

[18] See, for example, Vu 2010, Taylor and Botea 2008, Centeno 2003, and Tilly 1990.

[19] Saldin 2011; Kroenig and Stowsky 2010.

[20] Saldin 2011: 9.

[21] Smith 1997.

socialists, and labor activists into the common category of "potential terrorists." The laws, policies, and institutions crafted in response to this inflated threat then cemented these broader prejudices within American counterterrorism for the long-term, and, in some cases, continue to influence American security today.

The Assassination of President McKinley & the Origins of American Counterterrorism

Internal and external violence have been a central part of American political and social life. Indeed, Gage writes that "… there remains a tendency to think of violence as an anomaly, something outside the American experience, rather than as one of the many ways that Americans have long carried out their political disputes."[22] In the late 1800s through early 1900s, members of the KKK, Irish-American Fenians, anarchists, communists, and those who opposed these groups all resorted to violence through their disagreements over political institutions. Through these early experiences with violence and, in some cases, terror, American society and officials articulated ideas about where this violence came from and what response would end it. These ideas, alongside actual material damage caused by this violence, information about the violent intent of these groups and preexisting institutions which structured who or what could impact these debates then became core influences in the processes of threat construction.

Throughout this history, the exclusion of threatening populations came to dominate as the basis for security against radicalism and acts of terrorism. Officials believed that the best way to protect American institutions and citizens was to restrict those who had access to them. This logic then drew divisions along the lines of the particular populations perceived to be threats, and it drove security responses which targeted entire groups of people. Reactions to the perceived threat from Japanese-Americans during World War II, which led to the internment on US soil of US citizens of Japanese descent; the McCarthyist "Communist Witch Hunts" of the 1950s; and, today, the fate of refugees from the Syrian Civil War in light of the 2015 Paris terror attacks are all potential examples of this logic. In the case of McKinley's assassination, the reactions of state officials in turn institutionalized inflated perceptions of the anarchist threat. In this section, I illustrate this processes: one of threat construction, threat inflation, and threat response.

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[22] Gage 2009: 6.

Constructing the Anarchist Threat

The view that anarchism was a threatening political ideology made up of individuals disposed to violence did not begin with McKinley's assassination; it began to take shape decades before. Through both public knowledge of Europe's experiences with anarchism and isolated, but influential, cases of anarchist violence in America, perceptions of the foreignness, violent nature, and illegitimacy of anarchism already existed. Interpretations of the meaning and significance of the assassination of McKinley did not lead to the ascription of these identity characteristics, but it drew on them, strengthened them, and reshaped them. The result was a widespread belief that anarchists, their affiliated movements—including workers' rights, communism, socialism, and feminism—and their affiliated identity groups—especially European immigrants—were disposed to radicalism and violence that threatened the American political system and society.

For the decades prior to McKinley's assassination, anarchism had been a potent, violent force in Europe. Through newspaper accounts, Americans were aware of tumultuous events and concomitant political dynamics in Europe, including the attempted assassinations of Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany (1878), King Umberto I of Italy (1878 and 1897), and Tsar Alexander II of Russia (1879); the successful assassinations of the head of the Russian Tsar's Secret Police (1878), Prince Dmitri Kropotkin of Russia (1879), Alexander II of Russia (1881), President Sadi Carnot of France (1894), Prime Minister Antonio Cánovas del Castillo of Spain (1897), Empress Elisabeth of Austria (1898), and King Umberto I (who succumbed to his third assassination attempt in 1900); and the bombings of the Russian Winter Palace in 1880 (killing eight and wounding 45), the Liceo Theater in Barcelona in 1893 (killing more than 30 people), and a café in Paris in 1894 (killing one and injuring 20).[23]

In the American experience, anarchist violence during this period had been rare, with the exceptions of the Haymarket Affair in Chicago (May 4, 1886) and the attack on industrialist Henry Clay Frick in 1892. The Haymarket Affair began as a peaceful assembly of labor activists, anarchists, and socialists, but after the arrival of the Chicago police, it ended with a bomb being tossed in the crowd in their direction. Seven police officers and four civilians were killed, and the bomb thrower was never conclusively identified. Six years later, Russian immigrant Alexander Berkman repeatedly shot and stabbed a manager for Carnegie Steel named Henry Clay Frick, although Frick survived. Responses to these events led to some of the first correlations of anarchists and other social groups to violence. In an

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[23] These acts, among others, are described in Jensen 2014.

analysis of the Haymarket Affair written in 1889, Schaak's *Anarchy and Anarchists* linked "Communists, Russian assassins, dynamiters, and labor agitators" with the Chicago anarchists.[24] These connections proved problematic for these groups. Ordinary trade unionists, for example, found themselves in an increasingly hostile atmosphere, as anger over the Haymarket Affair gave anti-union employers and officials a way to brand all labor activists as violent subversives.[25] Likewise, these earlier experiences with anarchist violence also produced some of the first attempts at adding anarchists to the list of proscribed classes of immigration in the 1880s and 1890s.[26]

Certain self-proclaimed speakers for the anarchist cause also strengthened the perspective that their movement was violent. For example, Johann Most, a German immigrant who moved to America to support the labor movement in 1882, popularized the idea of "propaganda of the deed" or *attentat*.[27] This idea was founded on the belief that individual acts of terrorism were necessary to further the political and economic progress of the oppressed.[28] Describing this sentiment, Most wrote that:

> The day of reckoning and revenge is near. The fight has begun along the picket line. A girdle of dynamite encircled the world, not only the old but the new. The bloody band of tyrants are dancing on the surface of a volcano. There is dynamite in England, France, Germany, Russia, Italy, Spain, New York, and Canada.[29]

The "propaganda of the deed" became a core component of certain proponents of anarchist philosophy, including Luigi Galleani, who many of the investigators of the 1920 Wall Street Bombing suspected as the orchestrator of that attack. However, this belief in the efficacy of violence for their cause was not shared by all anarchists. Goldman, among others, had long renounced the "propaganda of the deed."[30] Nonetheless, the Haymarket Affair brought international attention to the preoccupation with explosives found in anarchists publications, such as *The Alarm* and *Die Freiheit*.[31]

The influence of Emma Goldman in the anarchist movement also points to an often overlooked piece of the history of this era. While the connections between immigrants, anarchists, and the working

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[24] Discussed in Sewell 1986: 730.

[25] Green 2006: 11.

[26] Hong 1990: 6.

[27] *Attentat* means attack in English.

[28] Gage 2009: 41.

[29] Gage 2009: 47. Quoting Most, *The Social Monster: A Paper on Communism and Anarchism* (New York: Bernard and Schenck, 1890).

[30] Jensen 2001: 33.

[31] Whelehan 2012: 171. *Freiheit* means freedom in English.

class have been well documented, the significant role played by women and the overlap of these social forces with those in pursuit of women's rights has not.[32] In addition to her working class and anarchist advocacy, Emma Goldman also championed this cause, though through a more radical variant often referred to as the "Free Love" movement. In one essay—"Love Among the Free"—she wrote that, for a woman to be truly human, "Everything within her that craves assertion and activity should reach its fullest expression; all artificial barriers should be broken, and the road towards greater freedom cleared of every trace of centuries of submission and slavery."[33] For their role in the workers' rights movement, women were portrayed as "wild and vengeful, though also independent."[34] While the latter could be considered a small success by today's standards, their description as "wild and vengeful" demonstrates how connections to anarchism and workers' rights became one method by which anti-feminists sought to delegitimize the womens' rights movement and to resist the legitimization of women as autonomous political figures. These characterizations were particularly prevalent in the late 1910s after World War I and around the time of the Palmer Raids.[35]

These prejudices and perceptions of violence and social deviance united when President William McKinley was assassinated by Leon Czolgosz in Buffalo, NY, on Sept. 6, 1901. The day after McKinley had given a speech at the Pan-American Exposition, Czolgosz waited for hours to meet him during a public reception that had been advertised in the newspapers. Holding a short-barreled revolver in his right hand, wrapped in a handkerchief, Czolgosz passed by exposition guards, 10 Marines, and three US Secret Service agents to shoot McKinley twice. McKinley survived for days, but eventually died due to septic shock and heart failure on Sept. 14, 1901.[36] McKinley joined Abraham Lincoln and James Garfield as the third of the last seven elected presidents to be assassinated.

Immediately following the assassination, public officials sought to make sense of the Czolgosz's motivations. He was a self-proclaimed anarchist, but investigations of his ties to other proponents of the movement led to confusion and contradictory evidence.[37] In a US Department of Justice investigative report from 1919, Czolgosz's confession is the only evidence offered for his connection to the anarchists.

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[32] One exception is Nielsen 2001.

[33] Goldman, "Love among the free," originally published by the Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1917. Copied from Horowitz, 1964.

[34] Whelehan 2012: 244.

[35] Nielsen 2001.

[36] Details provided in Jensen 2014: 238-9.

[37] Jensen 2014: 242.

In it, Czolgosz stated that he had frequented a club in Cleveland where he met Goldman and other prominent anarchists, and that, like them, he also personally did not believe in the American form of government. These views were also partly informed, according to Czolgosz, by the anarchist publication *Free Society*.[38] In a report from a psychological evaluation of Czolgosz from Sept. 28, 1901, Czolgosz claimed to be a part of a nameless anarchist organization. However, later testimony suggested that this was in fact a socialist organization that had fallen apart in 1900.[39] It could be concluded that Czolgosz desired to become an anarchist, but not necessarily that he had substantial interactions with or knowledge of them.[40]

Czolgosz's citizenship was also in dispute, demonstrating the lingering controversy over birthright citizenship enacted through the 14th Amendment. Though he was a natural born American under the law, state officials stripped Czolgosz of his American identity in their descriptions of him and of his attack on the president. In a speech during deliberations over a new bill for presidential protection, US Rep. Edward L. Hamilton of Michigan stated that Czolgosz was the "emotional and unreasonable results of hereditary hatred of Old World government oppression" and in his "blood runs the transmitted horror of Siberia, the hatred of the government of which Siberia is a part, and the inherited memory of the Polish national extinction." This heredity meant that, for anarchists, "[o]ur language is unknown to them … Our institutions are unknown to them. Free speech, free press, personal liberty … are at first incomprehensible to them." Given this, Hamilton concluded that "[a]narchy here is in no sense the product of American conditions, but a growth transplanted from abroad."[41] According to this interpretation, Czolgosz's assassination of the president had no relation to American values or institutions but was an act defined by Czolgosz's European ancestry. This interpretation fed on the view of the European, bomb-throwing anarchist that had grown out of the Haymarket Affair. In turn, it furthered the notion that all European immigrants, particularly those associated with "radical" causes, to be potential sources of threat.

The media, business elites, state officials, and others sought to weigh in on the scope and nature of the threat posed by anarchism. American newspapers demanded the death penalty for assassins or

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[38] Senate Report, 66th Congress, 1st Session, Investigative Activities of the Department of Justice, Document No. 153, Nov. 17, 1919: 41-44. Accessed via ProQuest Congressional.

[39] Jensen 2014: 242-243.

[40] Ibid.: 244.

[41] Congressional Record, June 5, 1902, 6349. Accessed via ProQuest Congressional.

would-be assassins, called for police control of anarchists, declared that anarchism should become the international equivalent of piracy, or that anarchists should all be deported to an island.[42] Despite the tenuous connections Czolgosz had to anarchism, state officials drew from these widespread conceptions of the threat of anarchists to make sense of this event. President Theodore Roosevelt, McKinley's successor, made his belief in this connection clear in an address to the Senate on Dec. 3, 1901, stating that Czolgosz was "… an utterly depraved criminal belonging to that body of criminals who object to all governments, good and bad alike, who are against any form of popular liberty if it is guaranteed by even the most just and liberal laws, and who are as hostile to the upright exponent of a free people's sober will as to the tyrannical and irresponsible despot."[43] The *Chicago Tribune* labeled Roosevelt's reaction to the McKinley assassination a "War on Anarchists."[44]

Lacking from this view was any culpability on the part of the institutions that Czolgosz had identified as the source of his frustrations. In fact, President Roosevelt actively sought to counter the anarchist's arguments against American institutions. In doing so, he argued that "[a]narchy is no more an expression of 'social discontent' than picking pockets or wife-beating," and that "[t]here are no wrongs to remedy in [Czolgosz's] case. The cause of his criminality is to be found in his own evil passions and in the evil conduct of those who urge him on, not in any failure by others or by the State to do justice to him or his."[45] Likewise, the economic institutions in America could not be held accountable according to Roosevelt, as "[t]he captains of industry … have on the whole done great good to our people."[46]

This reaction was not the only response available following the assassination of McKinley. This demonization of the anarchists could have, for example, given way to national mourning and introspection, or to a dialogue of reconciliation with prominent anarchists and leaders of affiliated movements, or it could have raised the significance of Czolgosz's mental health and access to handguns.[47] Anarchists and those friendly to their cause, for instance, had a very different interpretation of events. Commentary concerning Czolgosz, as well as the assassin of Empress Elizabeth of Austria (who was killed in 1898), argued that these individuals were not "diabolical anarchists fired by a complex plot to

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[42] Jensen 2014: 248.

[43] Congressional Record, December 2 1901, 81. Accessed via ProQuest Congressional.

[44] Gage 2009: 66.

[45] Message from the President of the U.S. to Congress, Congressional Record of the Senate, Tuesday December 3 1901: 82.

[46] Ibid.

[47] For a similar argument about national mourning and introspection, but based on the 9/11 attacks, see Huysmans 2006: 7.

take over the world" but were "merely unstable and caught up in revolutionary rhetoric."[48] Indeed, a 1978 US House and Senate report from the Select Committee on Assassinations—created to investigate the assassinations of John F. Kennedy (1963) and Martin Luther King, Jr. (1968)—noted that "an anarchist group had published a warning about Czolgosz 5 days before McKinley was shot and Czolgsosz insisted he had acted alone."[49]

Despite these arguments against the anarchist and European identity of Czolgosz, and through the lingering effects of the Haymarket affair, ideational and institutional factors combined to produce the belief that anarchists, European immigrants, socialists, and labor activists all constituted a threat to American society. Through the process of making sense of McKinley's assassination, the threat posed by Czolgosz inflated to encompass these broader social and political identities. President Roosevelt's message to Congress is demonstrative of this threat inflation, stating that "[t]he anarchist is everywhere not merely the enemy of system and of progress, but the deadly foe of liberty," and that they "would not merely be stamped out, but would involve in their own ruin every active or passive sympathizer with their doctrines."[50] It was this expansive interpretation of the threat as inclusive of "every sympathizer" that became the basis of the state's response.

Responding to the Threat of Anarchism: Presidential Protection, Immigration Control, & Increased Federal Policing Powers

The assassination of President McKinley marked the renewed salience of the perceived threat of anarchist political violence. At this time, as Gage notes, "the restrictions born with Haymarket and debated throughout the 1890s began to make their way into law."[51] However, little was known about the actual material threat posed by those who subscribed to anarchist philosophy, nor was it clear to what extent anarchists in general favored the use of violence. Given this uncertainty concerning the material capabilities of the anarchists and the lack of information regarding their intent, ideational factors loomed large, and interpretations of the significance of this event drove the state's security response. This response focused on three primary objectives: exclude anarchists from the US through immigration restrictions,

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[48] Kassel 2009: 246.

[49] "Final Report, Summary of Findings and Recommendations", House and Senate Reports, Select Committee on Assassinations, Jan. 2, 1978. Accessed via ProQuest Congressional. It is not clear whether or not state officials had access to this information prior to McKinley's assassination.

[50] Message from the President of the U.S. to Congress, Congressional Record of the Senate, Tuesday, Dec. 3, 1901: 82.

[51] Gage 2009: 67.

increase presidential protection, and increase the policing and investigatory powers of the federal government to prevent the spread of radical political philosophies.

The immediate response to the assassination was Czolgosz's arrest, the investigation of his involvement with other anarchists, and his trial, which lasted only three days and was marked by "many irregularities".[52] Disturbingly, some historical accounts suggest that Czolgosz was tortured following his arrest.[53] Beyond the treatment of Czolgosz, anarchists in America were immediately affected by the fallout from McKinley's assassination. One anarchist described the public's reaction as a "stamping-out craze," which included bands of armed men forcing supposedly anarchist families from their homes, anarchists' losing their jobs and having their possessions confiscated, and beatings. Beyond these non-official responses, anarchists were also arrested simply for being anarchists. In one example, a Rochester grand jury was asked to indict 100 anarchists on the charge of conspiracy against the government, although this was refused for lack of evidence. In Chicago, more than 50 suspected anarchists, including Emma Goldman, were arrested and held without bail for 17 days on suspicion of involvement with the assassination.[54]

At the federal level, President Roosevelt's message to Congress not only framed the expansive interpretation of the threat posed by Czolgosz and the anarchists, it also began to articulate a view of what was believed to be the necessary security response. Roosevelt argued that Anarchist speeches and writings were "seditious and treasonable," that Congress "should take into consideration the coming to this country of anarchists," and that there should be "rigorous punishment" for those who target or glorify the murder of state leaders.[55] The next day, members of Congress took up many of these recommendations. Numerous petitions were presented asking for the enactment of legislation to suppress anarchy, and bills for the exclusion and deportation of alien anarchists, enactment of the death penalty for those who threatened the life of the president or vice president, and emendation of extradition treaties to enable the extradition of criminal anarchists were proposed.[56] One representative asked whether amending the constitution would be necessary to legislate for the punishment of anarchists.[57] Perhaps

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[52] Jensen 2014: 247.

[53] Ibid., and Jensen 2013: 90.

[54] Jensen 2014: 247.

[55] Message from the President of the US to Congress, Congressional Record of the Senate, Tuesday, Dec. 3, 1901: 82.

[56] Congressional Record of Senate, 57th Congress, 1st session, Dec. 4, 1901: 115-131.

[57] Ibid.: 131.

capturing the mood, another representative read a petition which "respectfully but earnestly" called for the enactment of "such legislation as may be considered most effectual to finally eradicate this deadly poison which threatens the life of the nation."[58]

Despite his native birth, Czolgosz became the impetus for new restrictions proposed by Congress on immigration to the US. In a bill that was passed on March 3, 1903, new powers were given to the Bureau of Immigration to exclude and deport alien anarchists.[59] Here, the US Secretary of the Treasury (with which the Bureau of Immigration was affiliated at this time) was given the authority to prohibit the entry of any person "who disbelieves in or who is opposed to all organized government, or who is a member of or affiliated with any organization entertaining and teaching such belief," or who advocates or teaches the "duty, necessity, or propriety" of the assaulting or killing of any officers of the government of the United States or of any other organized government.[60] Likewise, this bill allowed for the deportation within two years after arrival of those who violated the law, and within three years for those who were later found to have illegally entered.[61]

Beyond this, the Immigration Act of 1903 marked other profound changes in American immigration legislation. This Act imposed a head tax for any non-US, Canadian, Cuban, or Mexican citizen entering the country, the requirement of a medical examination, additional oversight of transport vessels, instructions for detainment and return of illegal immigrants, new definitions of the duties of the Commissioner-General of Immigration, and updated naturalization requirements. The act excluded all "idiots, insane persons, [and] epileptics" or persons who had been insane in at least the past five years; "paupers; persons likely to become a public charge; [and] professional beggars"; those inflicted with an infectious disease; and criminals, polygamists, contract laborers, and prostitutes, among others. In fact, the deportation and exclusion of anarchists was, by the time of the bill's passage, relatively buried in the act, relegated to Section 38. Thus, while McKinley's assassination became the impetus for more restrictive immigration legislation, the end result betrayed a wider range of political interests. Indeed, it is perhaps not a coincidence that on the same day that petitions were read for the suppression of anarchism,

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[58] Ibid.: 115.

[59] An Act to Regulate the immigration of aliens into the United States, Public no. 162, 57th Congress, 2nd Session, Chs. 1011, 1012, March 2, 1903.

[60] Ibid., section 38.

[61] Ibid., sections 20 and 21.

hundreds of other petitions "praying for the reenactment of the Chinese-exclusion law" were also presented.[62]

Given that McKinley was the third president to be killed out of the last seven, his assassination sparked Congress to accept that ordinary laws punishing the killing of any civilian had to be made more severe in the case of the chief executive.[63] However, these laws also grew from the perceived threat of anarchist ideology. Representative Hamilton, during deliberations over a bill for presidential protection, argued that the penalty had to be more severe, as the killing of the president was "a crime against government" and that Czolgosz had assassinated McKinley "because he represented organized society, not because of any personal grudge against him." These changes in presidential protection led to the formalization of the role of the Secret Service, which had been informally protecting the president since 1894. This development was not automatic, however. Congress approved funds for presidential protection by the Secret Service only in 1906, and Secret Service agents continued to work on the fraud and counterfeiting cases that had come with their original creation within the Department of the Treasury until 1908.[64]

Before taking up the responsibility of presidential protection full time, Secret Service agents also acted as the first national investigatory force. After McKinley's assassination, the Secret Service developed a national index of names of suspected anarchists, organized by the city in which they were located.[65] The Post Office Department (now called the US Postal Service) also became a source for surveillance of the anarchists, as anarchist mail and publications were monitored and reported on to Washington, DC. However, the responsibilities of the Secret Service gradually shifted to the US Department of Justice. District offices began to report on the activities of anarchists after the McKinley assassination. In 1908, President Roosevelt secretly instructed Attorney General Charles Bonaparte to create an investigatory agency in the justice department. This agency was called the Bureau of Investigation, the predecessor of the FBI.[66]

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[62] Congressional Record of Senate, 57th Congress, 1st session, Dec. 4, 1901: 115.

[63] Congressional Record of the House of Representatives, 57th Congress, 2nd session, June 5, 1902, 6349, Mr. Hamilton: "The killing of William McKinley as a citizen of Ohio, or as a temporary resident of any State, would be a crime against the laws of that state, but the killing of a President, because he is President, and because of the Government he represents, is a crime against government and out to be so punished."

[64] Jensen 1981.

[65] Rg 87 US Secret Service, Department of the Treasury, entry a1 39, list of suspected anarchists 1901-1902, container 1, National Archives at College Park.

[66] Barton 2015: 313.

Some evidence exists of these early Department of Justice investigations of the anarchists. One letter from the US Attorney of the Southern District of Ohio, Cincinnati, to the attorney general in July 1902 shows the tactics the department pursued against anarchists. In the letter, a "colony of anarchists" was identified within a local saloon, which was said to be "now flourishing and plotting violence against chief officers of the government." The letter reported that Most and Goldman had both visited the saloon (separately) and that the saloon keeper, the source of these reports, had sympathized with an intoxicated anarchist, Lewie Duble, who then told him how to make a bomb and that something bad would happen to the president in about four months.[67] In another letter from a US Circuit Court in Washington in March 1902, anarchists' use of the Pierce County post office to deposit mail for delivery led to the recommendation that the office be closed. The official in charge there was said to be aware of the sending of "non-mailable matter and matter calculated to corrupt and injure the members of the body politic."[68]

These responses to the threat of anarchism immediately following the assassination of McKinley laid the groundwork for the treatment of anarchists and affiliated ideologies—including the communists, socialists, feminists, and labor activists—for decades to come. This period saw developments in immigration legislation, presidential protection, and national investigatory and policing functions. All of these actions were targeted at anarchists in general, even those who advocated for peaceful political change. However, while the immediate aftermath of McKinley's assassination led to widespread mistreatment and arrests of anarchists, the laws and policies enacted during this period had relatively few consequences for them. The real weight of these policies would not be felt until the Palmer Raids of 1917, when thousands of immigrants nationwide were arrested and detained on the suspicion of Bolshevism (communism) or anarchism. Among these, hundreds would be deported. These actions were made possible by later immigration legislation that expanded upon the 1903 act.

The expansiveness of this response to the anarchist threat was not unnoticed by those affected by it. For example, Goldman said to Louis Post, an assistant US Secretary of Labor who opposed the Palmer Raids, that "the Anti-Anarchist law confuses the most varied social philosophies and isms in order to cover with the same blanket, so to speak, every element of social protest … in order to serve the interests of our industrial kings."[69] Likewise, historians have argued that these laws "disproportionately" affected

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[67] Record Group 60: General Records of the Department of Justice D.J. Central Files Year Files, 1884-1903, National Archives in College Park, RE: McKinley Assassination Removed.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Kanstroom 2007: 152.

moderate anarchists, including Goldman who was deported under these laws despite her US citizenship and John Turner who had advocated labor organization but not violence.[70]

Conclusion

Immigration controls and US Department of Justice reactions to the McKinley assassination not only sought to remove the threat of anarchist terrorism but also to exclude anarchist and foreign influence from American society. By the time of the Palmer Raids, the groups associated with this threat and targeted by these social controls expanded, as the threat posed by violent anarchists came to be associated with broader social and political identities. The idea of "radicalism," in addition to "terrorism," was used to label and delegitimize these groups widely. The sporadic violence of anarchism and the expansive definitions of the threat it posed became entwined with notions of what constituted a legitimate, American way of engaging in social and political life.

A cursory look at the scholarship on US counterterrorism might conclude that the subject has no history. Indeed, an analysis of terrorism publications from either before or after the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, found that only 2% to 4% take a historical focus.[71] While some terrorism studies scholars suggest that on 9/11 "bin Laden wiped the slate clean of the conventional wisdom on terrorists and terrorism" and created a "new era of terrorism," the logic driving the counterterrorist response cannot be divorced from the long-term impacts of America's earlier experiences with terror. Contemporary counterterrorism is affected by this history in at least two ways: in the longevity of the idea of exclusion as a tool for security, and in the particular institutions that changed or grew out of these events. The laws, policies, and institutions at the center of these counter-radical activities are the predecessors of contemporary surveillance, counterterrorism, and immigration institutions in the US. These institutions are the origins of American counterterrorism.

Why does identity-based threat inflation occur in some cases but not in others? To answer this question, further research for this dissertation will look at state responses to the Ku Klux Klan and Irish Fenians, while also delving further into the history of anarchist political violence (including a more detailed analysis of the Haymarket Affair and events prior to McKinley's assassination, as well as the

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[70] Jensen 2014: 257.

[71] Silke 2009.

mail-bomb plot, Wall Street bombing, Industrial Workers of the World strikes, and other events that followed McKinley's assassination). The responses to the KKK and Fenians portrayed these groups as having plausible ties to Americanism, so their acts of violence were explained as deviant behavior. This deviance, unlike in the case of anarchists and Eastern Europeans, was not argued to be evidence of the need to exclude all racist white Americans or all Irish-Americans from American political life. Exploring these earlier cases will help to further clarify why the treatment of the anarchists and other political and social groups associated with them was both exceptional and foundational.

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SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AND COUNTERTERRORISM

300 DINEEN HALL | 950 IRVING AVENUE
SYRACUSE, NY 13244
P: 315.443.2284
E: insct@syr.edu
W: insct.syr.edu
T: @INSCT