

1,198 2

Views

4

CrossRef citations to date

Altmetric

Original Articles

Terrorism Watch Lists, Suspect Ranking and Decision-Making Biases

Peter J. Phillips & Gabriela Pohl

Pages 898-914 | Received 11 Jul 2017, Accepted 16 Jan 2018, Published online: 16 Feb 2018

Cite this article

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1432046>

Check for updates

Sample our
Politics & International
Relations Journals

>> [Sign in here](#) to start your access
to the latest two volumes for 14 days

Full Article

Figures & data

Citations

Metrics

Reprints & Permissions

Read this article

Share

We Care About Your Privacy

We and our 872 partners store and access personal data, like browsing data or unique identifiers, on your device. Selecting I Accept enables tracking technologies to support the purposes shown under we and our partners process data to provide. Selecting Reject All or withdrawing your consent will disable them. If trackers are disabled, some content and ads you see may not be as relevant to you. You can resurface this menu to change your choices or withdraw consent at any time by clicking the Show Purposes link on the bottom of the webpage. Your choices will have effect within our Website. For more details, refer to our Privacy Policy. [Here](#)

We and our partners process data to provide:

Use precise geolocation data. Actively scan device

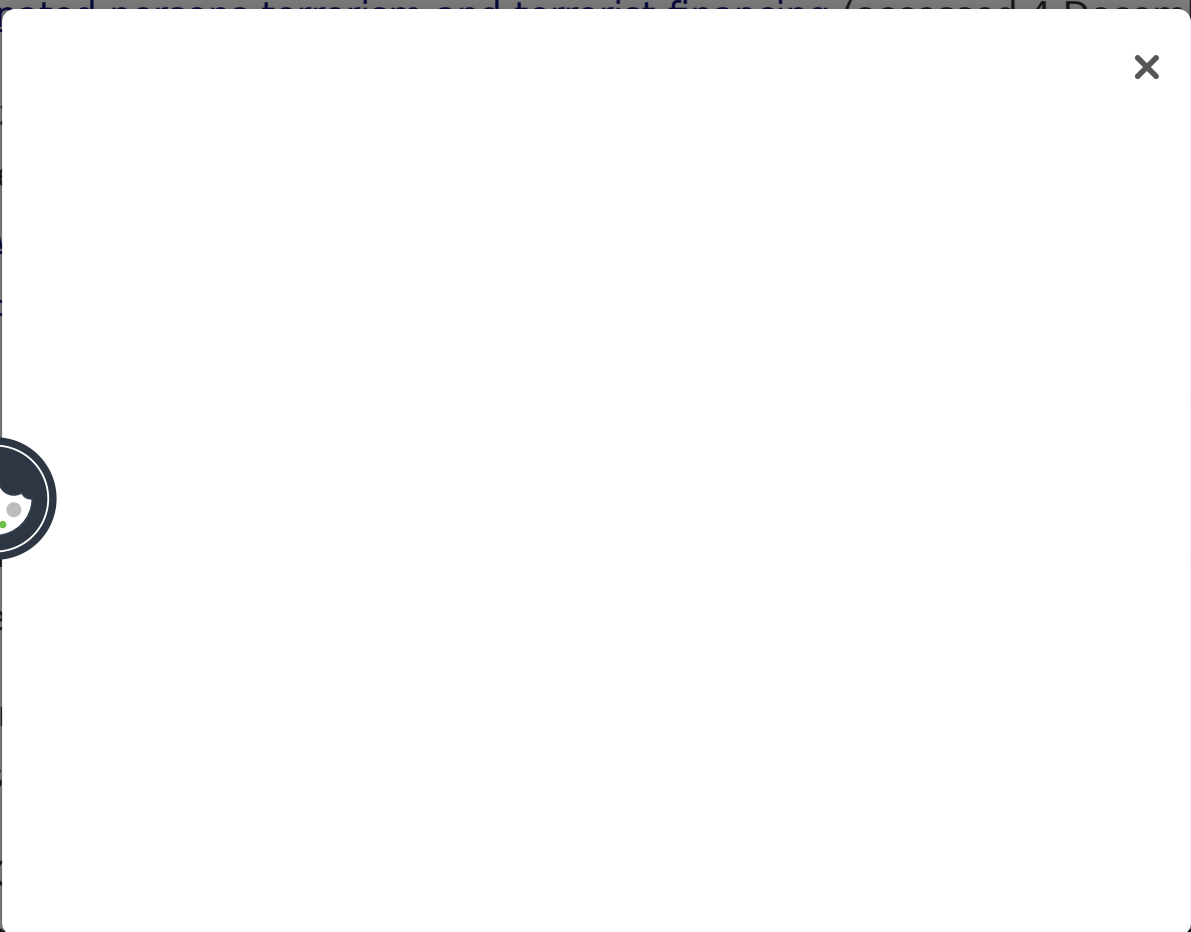
I Accept

Reject All

Show Purpose



1. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Terrorist Screening Center, 29 November 2017.
2. Kenneth Lai, Svetlana Yanushkevich, Vlad Schmerko, and Shawn Eastwood, "Bridging the Gap between Forensics and Biometric-Enabled Watchlists for e-Borders," IEEE Computational Intelligence Magazine, February 2017, p.16.
3. Ruth Alexander, "Terror Watch Lists: Can You Keep Tabs on Every Suspect?" BBC News, 2 June 2013. Available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-22718000> (accessed 21 June 2017).
4. BBC News, "London Attack: What We Know So Far," 12 June 2017. Available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-39355108> (accessed 21 June 2017).
5. Melissa Eddy, Jack Ewing, Joanna Berendt, and Eric Schmitt, "Berlin Attack Sets Off Hunt for Tunisian in Germany," The New York Times, 21 December 2016; BBC News, "Berlin Attack: Family Urges Suspect to Surrender," 22 December 2016. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/21/world/europe/attack-sets-off-hunt-for-tunisian-who-had-slipped-germanys-grasp.html> (accessed 21 June 2017); <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38402743> (accessed 21 June 2017).
6. HM Treasury, "Current List of Designated Persons: Terrorism and Terrorist Financing," 13 October 2017. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/current-list-of-designated-persons-terrorism-and-terrorist-financing> (accessed 14 December 2017).
7. Loren... of 173 Suspect... available at <https://www.../interpol-...>
8. Amos... ulative... 297–323.
9. Willia... er Prescree...
10. Justi... st Watchlis...
11. Del C... 10 Months and Found Nothing. Here's why, Los Angeles Times, 14 July 2016. Available at



<http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-fbi-investigation-mateen-20160712-snap-story.html> (accessed 21 June 2017).

12. Tayler Houston, *Mass Surveillance and Terrorism: Does PRISM Keep Americans Safer?* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Honours Thesis Projects, 2017).

13. Anna Momigliano, "Why Terror Suspects in Europe Slip Through Security Cracks," *Washington Post*, 9 June 2017. Available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/06/09/why-terror-suspects-in-europe-slip-through-security-cracks/?utm_term=.04729800c455 (accessed 2 December 2017).

14. BBC Newsbeat, "Does a Terror Watch List Exist in the UK and how is it Used by Police?" 6 June 2017. Available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/40158730/does-a-terror-watch-list-exist-in-the-uk-and-how-is-it-used-by-police> (accessed 23 June 2017).

15. Tom Avery, Dan Byram, Amy Davis, Rick Michelson, and Paul Starrett, *Homeland Security Principles, Planning and Procedures* (San Clemente, CA: Lawtech Publishing, 2004).

16. Krouse and Elias, *Terrorist Watchlist Checks and Air Passenger Prescreening*, p. 2.

17. Bart... Available... (accessed... June 2016. [867624/](#)

18. Flore

19. Ibid,

20. Ib

21. Ibid.

22. Krou... Anya Be... (2013), p... ing, p. 19; view 61

23. The... h list at the time of the shooting, although he had been. It is also important to note that the



terrorism watch list will trigger an alert to law enforcement if an individual whose name is on the watch list purchases a firearm (legitimately) but it does not prohibit individuals whose names are on the watch list from initially making the purchase.

24. Bart Jansen, "America's Terrorist Watch List, Explained"; Lisa Mascaro and Jill Ornitz, "Senate Votes Down Proposal to Bar Gun Sales to Terrorism Suspects," Los Angeles Times, 20 June 2016. Available at <http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-gun-votes-20160620-snap-story.html> (accessed 4 December 2017).

25. Home Office (United Kingdom), "Guidance: Surveillance and Counter-Terrorism," 26 March 2013. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/surveillance-and-counter-terrorism> (accessed 1 December 2017).

26. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (United Kingdom), "Foreign Secretary Statement to the House of Commons—GCHQ," 10 June 2013. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/foreign-secretary-statement-to-the-house-of-commons-gchq> (accessed 1 December 2017).

27. Brent Snook, Michelle Wright, John C. House, and Laurence J. Alison, "Searching for a Needle in a Needle Stack: Combining Criminal Careers and Journey-to-Crime Research for Criminal Suspect Prioritisation," *Police Practice and Research* 7 (2006), pp. 217–230.

28. David ...
Effective ... 8 (2007),
pp. 371–

29. Sam ...
The Face ... Canter, ed.,
10).

30. Pr ...
Econ ... Terrorist: Can
Research ... ecurity

31. Ibid.

32. David ... (7).

33. David ... " in David
Canter and L. Alison, ed., *Criminal Detection and the Psychology of Crime* (Aldershot:



Ashgate, 1993).

34. David Canter and A. Gregory, "Identifying the Residential Location of Serial Rapists," *Journal of the Forensic Science Society* 34 (1994), pp. 164–175.
35. P. J. Brantingham and P. L. Brantingham, *Environmental Criminology* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1981).
36. S. S. Kind, "Navigational Ideas and the Yorkshire Ripper Investigation," *Journal of Navigation* 40, pp. 385–393.
37. D. Kim Rossmo, *Geographic Profiling* (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2000).
38. Canter and Hammond, "Prioritising Burglars."
39. David Canter and Donna Youngs, eds., *Principles of Geographic Offender Profiling* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).
40. Brent Snook et al. "Searching for a Needle in a Needle Stack."
41. *Ibid.*, p. 225.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 226.
43. Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "Rational Choice and the Framing of Decision
44. Nich review and Assessm
45. Rich ation of Language Crimes," Inform ation Assu
46. Rich y in General Retrieva
47. *Ibid.*
48. J. R. ," Economic (2007), pp. 100–101



49. Peter J. Phillips and Gabriela Pohl, "Terrorist Choice: A Stochastic Dominance and Prospect Theory Analysis," *Defence and Peace Economics* 28 (2017), pp. 150–164.

50. Paul Slovic and Sarah Lichtenstein, "Relative Importance of Probabilities and Payoffs in Risk Taking," *Journal of Experimental Psychology* 78 (1968), pp. 1–18.

51. John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern, *Theory of Games and Economic Behaviour*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947).

52. Ward Edwards, "The Prediction of Decisions Among Bets," *Journal of Experimental Psychology* 50, pp. 201–214; Leonard J. Savage, *The Foundation of Statistics* (New York: Wiley, 1954).

53. Phillips and Pohl, "Terrorist Choice."

54. Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," *Econometrica* 47 (1979), pp. 263–292.

55. Tversky and Kahneman, "Advances in Prospect Theory."

56. Lola L. Lopes and Gregg C. Oden, "The Role of Aspiration Level in Risky Choice: A Comparison of Cumulative Prospect Theory and SP/A Theory," *Journal of Mathematical Psychology* 43 (1999), pp. 286–313.

57. Paul Slovic and Oskar Morgenstern, "Stochastic Dominance and Evidence," *Journal of Mathematical Psychology* 18 (1979), pp. 563–574.

58. Richard H. Thaler, "Prospect Theory: The Analysis of Decision Under Ambiguity," *Journal of Economic Literature* 40 (2002), pp. 1–51.

59. Nonlinear Prospect Theory: The Role of Attention and the Degree of Cautious Optimism that Characterizes the Decision Maker. More optimistic



decision makers accord more attention and proportionally more weight to better but less likely outcomes while more cautious decision makers accord more attention and proportionally more weight to worse but more likely outcomes (Lopes and Oden, "The Role of Aspiration Level in Risky Choice").

60. Haim Levy and Zvi Wiener, "Prospect Theory and Utility Theory: Temporary Versus Permanent Attitude Towards Risk," *Journal of Economics and Business* 68 (2013), pp. 1–23.

61. Ibid.

62. Peter J. Phillips and Gabriela Pohl, "Prospect Theory and Terrorist Choice," *Journal of Applied Economics* 17 (2014), pp. 139–160.

63. There are many different hypotheses that have been put forward to explain why decision makers weight probabilities in this manner. Tversky and Kahneman's explanation relies on the concept of diminishing sensitivity. This influences both the perception of outcomes (the decision maker is less sensitive to outcomes that are further from the reference point) and the subjective weighting of probabilities. Consider, for example, the different ways in which the same change in probability is perceived when moving from a 5 percent chance to a 10 percent chance (perceived as a doubling); from a 40 percent chance to a 45 percent chance (perceived as neither

here nor being very... Changes... attention... Probabil... perceived as... and 1... et more... the

64. Two... stic and (2) Kahneman, Psychology 5... d, and the... d University

65. The... g functions derived



66. Daniel Kahneman and G. Klein, "Conditions for Intuitive Expertise," *American Psychologist* 64 (2009), pp. 515–526.
67. Jean-Pierre Benoit, Juan Dubra, and Don Moore, "Does the Better-Than-Average-Effect Show that People Are Overconfident?," *Journal of the European Economic Association* 13 (2015), pp. 293–329.
68. Sarah Lichtenstein, Baruch Fischhoff, and L. D. Phillips, *Calibration of Probabilities: The State of the Art* (Eugene, OR: Oregon Research Institute, 1976). They state, "If a person assesses the probability of a proposition's being true as .70 and later finds that the proposition is false, that in itself does not invalidate the assessment. However, if a judge assigns .70 to 10,000 independent propositions, only 25 of which subsequently are found to be true, there is something wrong with these assessments. The attribute which they lack we call calibration" (p. 1).
69. That is, overconfidence introduces errors in probability assessments which are then further distorted by nonlinear probability weighting.

Related research

People also read

Recommended articles

Cited by



Information for

- Authors
- R&D professionals
- Editors
- Librarians
- Societies

Opportunities

- Reprints and e-prints
- Advertising solutions
- Accelerated publication
- Corporate access solutions

Keep up to date

Register to receive personalised research and resources by email

 Sign me up

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

Open access

- Overview
- Open journals
- Open Select
- Dove Medical Press
- F1000Research

Help and information

- Help and contact
- Newsroom
- All journals
- Books

