

Centre on Radicalisation and Terrorism –

An Ideological Pick ‘n’ Mix: The Rise of ‘Mixed’ Ideologies & their Implications for Terrorist Violence

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Introduction

Extremist ideology is experiencing an identity crisis. Movement across increasingly porous ideological borders presents grave challenges for the authorities, both with regards to the accurate and timely identification of divergent and disparate ideological influences, and the associated cross-pollination of tactics and methods used to perpetrate terrorist violence. The rise of ‘Mixed’ ideologies is in part

a product of the internet and social media’s ability to unite an ideologically disparate milieu who coalesce around hate and violence, and deliver an incalculable supply of ideologically diverse propaganda and mind-set material directly to the fingertips of the most vulnerable and disenfranchised in our societies. The face of the terror threat is evolving, and so too must our response.

Report Focus and Scope

This briefing report will first introduce the concept of ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’ ideologies. It will then turn to focus specifically upon the ‘Mixed’

element, exploring two distinct and emergent ideological categories therein: Involuntary Celibates (Incel); and ‘School Shooter’ related Mass Violence.

What Are Mixed, Unstable and Unclear Ideologies?

An ideology, as defined by extremism expert J.M Berger, is “a collection of texts that describe who is part of the in-group, who is part of the out-group, and how the in-group should interact with the out-group”.¹ The term ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’ ideology therefore, relates to instances where individuals exhibit a combination of elements from multiple ideologies (mixed), shift between different ideologies (unstable), or where the individual does not present any fixed or coherent ideology, yet may still pose a terrorism risk (unclear).²

The Growth of ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’ Ideologies

Referrals to the UK government’s Prevent programme in 2019/20 presenting a ‘Mixed, Unstable or Unclear’ ideology accounted for 51 per cent of all referrals - up from just 11 per cent in 2016/17. This represents a significant rise for the third consecutive year. For context, after ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’, the next

single most prevalent ideology exhibited by those referred was Islamist (24 per cent), followed closely by right-wing (22 per cent).³ The rise to prominence of ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’ ideologies in the ‘non-criminal’ Prevent space is reflected in the cases of a growing number of terrorist (TACT), and other violent offenders - a selection of which will be outlined below as case studies.

What is driving the growth of ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’ Ideologies?

There are likely a number of factors contributing to the increase in recorded cases of ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’ ideologies. One explanation is related to advancements in authorities’ identification and recording processes. Indeed, Counter-Terrorism Policing (CTP) National Prevent Coordinator, Chief Superintendent Nik Adams, stated: “One of the reasons for the increase will be the fact that we are getting better at spotting and recording this type of behaviour, which can manifest itself in a number of ways – such as a fascination with all

¹ Berger, J.M., *Extremism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2018), pp. 26-42.

² ‘Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent programme, April 2019 to March 2020’, Home Office, (2020), available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/individuals-referred-to-and-supported-through-the-prevent-programme-april-2019-to-march-2020/individuals-referred-to-and-supported->

[through-the-prevent-programme-april-2019-to-march-2020](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/individuals-referred-to-and-supported-through-the-prevent-programme-april-2019-to-march-2020), last visited: 7 January 2021.

³ ‘New statistics warn of increase in young men becoming fixated on violent extremism’, Counter-Terrorism Policing (2020), available at: <https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/new-prevent-statistics-warn-of-increase-in-young-men-becoming-fixated-on-violent-extremism>, last visited: 11 January 2021.

types of extremist or violent content, including school shootings or even extreme misogyny ideologies such as Inceldom”.⁴ Improvements in the identification and recording of ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’ ideologies have undoubtedly contributed to its statistical rise to prominence. However, that we are now seeing more ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’ cases do not point to its presence being new, nor does it necessarily represent any real net growth in the phenomenon itself –rather it simply demonstrates that we have now started looking at this concept, and know better what we are looking for.

Another factor contributing to the rise of ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’ ideologies is a notable increase in both the availability and accessibility of ideologically diverse, hateful and violent material online, recently described by the head of Counter-Terrorism Policing, Neil Basu, as being so voluminous that it “cannot be policed”.⁵ Tech platforms are routinely used by extremists both to radicalise and recruit: whether Brenton Tarrant live-streaming his March 2019 attack

in Christchurch, New Zealand,⁶ or Islamic State (IS) posting online videos in which they behead western journalists.⁷

While mainstream tech companies take increasingly proactive measures to identify and remove extremist content from their platforms, such moves largely resemble a ‘whack a mole’ strategy. It is true that deplatforming has borne considerable fruit in withdrawing access to the mainstream platforms that extremists, terrorists, and apostles of hate rely upon to propagandise and radicalise at scale. Yet, subsequent platform migration has seen many withdraw to the dark crevices of dubious alt-tech platforms who choose to look the other way as part of a ‘free-speech at all costs’ agenda. While platform migration away from the mainstream may reduce the reach of extremists, so too does it reduce authorities’ visibility of the problem and opportunities to act.⁸

⁴ ‘New statistics warn of increase in young men becoming fixated on violent extremism’, Counter-Terrorism Policing (2020)

⁵ Dearden, L., Online Extremism ‘cannot be policed’, says Head of UK Counter-Terror Police, *The Independent*, 7 January 2021, available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/extremism-online-police-definition-freedom-expression-bas-b1779631.html>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

⁶ ‘Christchurch Mosque Attack: Brenton Tarrant Sentenced to Life Without Parole’, *BBC News*, 27 August 2020, available at:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-53919624?intlink_from_url=&, last visited: 01 February 2021.

⁷ ‘James Foley: Islamic State Militants “Behead Reporter”’. *BBC News*, 20 August 2014, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-28862268>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

⁸ Greer, R., ‘Weighing the Value and Risks of Deplatforming’. Global Network on Extremism and Technology (2020), available at: <https://gnet-research.org/2020/05/11/weighing-the-value-and-risks-of-deplatforming/>, last visited: 01 February 2020

Incel Ideology

Involuntary Celibates (Incels) are considered the most extreme component part of the wider 'Manosphere' - a broad decentralised network of websites, chat rooms and gaming platforms oriented around an opposition to feminism, and which also features Pick up Artists (PUA's) who attempt to seduce women through manipulation; Men's Rights Activists who claim to advocate for men falsely accused of rape and the rights of fathers and divorced men; and Men Going their Own Way (MGTOW) who seek to isolate themselves from the influence of women altogether.⁹

Incels blame women and society as a whole for their inability to find romantic partners. They decry what they perceive as female superficiality - supposedly evidenced by their pursuit of 'traditionally attractive men'.¹⁰ Incels believe that they have a *right* to women and sex, and that by rejecting them, women are depriving men of their sexual birth right: which

they often refer to as women committing "reverse rape".¹¹ The *Blackpill* concept refers to an Incel's acceptance that their lack of romantic success is due largely to genetic deficiencies, which render futile any effort to effect physical change.¹² *Blackpill* thinking is characterised by hopelessness and resignation, and as such is regarded as a significant risk factor which often precedes an escalation to violence.¹³

Incel Influences

Elliot Rodger remains the primary 'poster boy' for vast swathes of the Incel movement, achieving 'saint-like' status, and referred to by many as 'The Supreme Gentleman'. Rodger, 22, killed six people in a gun and knife attack in Isla Vista, California in May 2014, before fatally shooting himself.¹⁴ The target of Rodger's attack was a sorority, attended by the types of young women he believed himself deserving of and entitled to, but who he felt had shunned and emasculated him.

⁹ 'The Manosphere', Hope not Hate (2019), available at: <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/2019/02/18/state-of-hate-2019-manosphere-explained>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

¹⁰ 'Incels (Involuntary Celibates)', ADL (2020), available at: <https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/incels-involuntary-celibates>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

¹¹ 'Tallahassee Shooter Appears to Have Been Racist Incel', ADL (2018), available at: <https://www.adl.org/blog/tallahassee-shooter->

[appears-to-have-been-racist-incelel](#), last visited: 01 February 2021.

¹² Beauchamp, Z., 'Incel, The Misogynist Ideology that Inspired the Deadly Toronto Attack, Explained', *Vox*, 25 April 2018, available at: <https://www.vox.com/world/2018/4/25/17277496/incel-toronto-attack-alek-minassian>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

¹³ Van Brunt, B; and Chris Taylor, *Understanding and Treating Incels* (New York: Routledge, 2021), p. 48.

¹⁴ 'Elliot Rodger is Isla Vista Drive-By Killer- US Police', *BBC News*, 25 May 2014, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-27562917>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

Rodger posted a video online just hours before the attack, where he warned that he would shoot women in retribution for never having had a girlfriend, stating: “For the last eight years of my life, ever since I hit puberty, I’ve been forced to endure an existence of loneliness, rejection and unfulfilled desires all because girls have never been attracted to me.” He went on to say, “I’ll take great pleasure in slaughtering all of you. You will finally see that I am, in truth, the superior one, the true alpha male”.¹⁵ Rodger also left a so-called ‘Manifesto’, titled ‘My Twisted World’, which he emailed to a number of people, including family members, childhood friends and his therapist prior to the attack. Describing his imminent assault, which he referred to as the ‘Day of Retribution’, Rodger’s manifesto read: “My orchestration of the Day of Retribution is my attempt to do everything, in my power, to destroy everything I cannot have. All of those beautiful girls I’ve desired so much in my life, but can never have,

because they despise and loathe me, I will destroy”.¹⁶

Rodger has since become an object of admiration and influence for Incels globally, including Christopher Harper-Mercer, 26, who fatally shot an assistant professor and eight students in a classroom at Umpqua Community College near Roseburg, Oregon in October 2015;¹⁷ Alek Minassian, 28, who killed ten and injured 16 after launching a vehicular attack on pedestrians in Toronto, Canada in April 2018;¹⁸ and Scott Beierle, 40, who fatally shot two women and injured another five at a yoga studio in Tallahassee, Florida in November 2018.¹⁹

Incel Ideological Influence in the UK

Below are two case studies of individuals convicted of offences under UK terrorism legislation, and/or other offences, where there is evidence of an Incel-related ideological influence.

¹⁵ Glasstetter, J., ‘Elliot Rodger, Isla Vista Shooting Suspect, Posted Misogynistic Video Before Attack’, Southern Poverty Law Centre (2014), available at: <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2014/05/24/elliott-rodger-isla-vista-shooting-suspect-posted-misogynistic-video-attack#:~:text=Hours%20before%20the%20attack,%20Rodger%20recorded%20a%20chilling,humanity%20because%20girls%20rejected%20him%20in%20his%20life>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

¹⁶ Rodger, E., ‘My Twisted World: The Story of Elliot Rodger’, No Institution (2014), available at: <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/11738-08-elliott-rodger-manifesto.html>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

¹⁷ Anderson, R., “‘Here I am, 26, with no friends, no job, no girlfriend’”: Shooter’s manifesto offers clues

to 2015 Oregon college rampage’, *Los Angeles Times*, 23 September 2017, available at: <https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-school-shootings-2017-story.html>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

¹⁸ ‘Alek Minassian: Toronto van attack suspect “killed 10 people because he was sexually frustrated”’. *Sky News*, 27 September 2019, available at: <https://news.sky.com/story/alek-minassian-toronto-van-attack-suspect-killed-10-people-because-he-was-sexually-frustrated-11820726>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

¹⁹ ‘Florida Yoga Gunman: Shooter “posted misogynist videos”’. *BBC News*, 4 November 2018, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-46090014>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

Case Study: Anwar Driouich

Anwar Driouich, 22, of Middlesbrough, was charged with one offence of possessing an explosive substance and seven offences of possessing a document likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism, and was sentenced to 20 months in prison.²⁰ Police found that Driouich had bought a total of 13.5 kg of ammonium nitrate (a component used to manufacture explosives), and possessed a number of weapons and accessories including a crossbow and arrow heads, a selection of knives, a knuckleduster, retractable baton, handcuffs, balaclavas, and instructions on how to make a flamethrower.²¹

Driouich was found to have an extensive internet search history related to the Incel ideology, having visited the website Incels.co just the day before his arrest, where he read an article warning of another Elliott Rodger-style attack. In a Facebook message dated March 31, 2020, Driouich told a friend that he wanted to

'end it all', stating: "It's f***** humiliating I have no hope with girls man I might as well be a ghost to them its [sic] pathetic". In addition to the Incel ideological influence, Driouich had also previously expressed his support for Brenton Tarrant, the far-right terrorist responsible for the March 2019 Christchurch mosque attacks in New Zealand, and right-wing figure and English Defence League (EDL) founder Tommy Robinson.²² He had also possessed and consumed an ideologically diverse array of terrorist propaganda and bomb-making manuals, including those of Al-Qaeda - further evidencing his complex ideological and tactical influence.²³

Case Study: Gabrielle Friel

Gabrielle Friel, 22, of Edinburgh, was sentenced to a total of 15 years, including 10 years imprisonment, after he was found guilty of possessing weapons for the purposes of terrorism under section 57 of the Terrorism Act 2000.²⁴ The weapons he possessed included a machete, an 'incomplete'

²⁰ 'Middlesbrough Man Sentenced for Terrorism Offences', Counter-Terrorism Policing (2020), available at: <https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/middlesbrough-man-sentenced-for-explosives-and-terrorism-offences>, last visited: 25 January 2021.

²¹ Rodger, J., 'Fantasist Obsessed with Incels Jailed Over Explosives and Terror Manuals', *Birmingham Mail*, 27 March 2020, available at: <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/uk-news/fantasist-obsessed-incels-jailed-over-17998017>, last visited: 25 January 2021.

²² Odling, G., 'Britain's First 'Incel' Bomb Maker: "Involuntary Celibate" who had no Luck with Women Pleads Guilty to Possessing Explosives and Terrorist Materials After Saying He Wanted to "Massacre This Place"', *Daily Mail* 26 March 2020,

available at: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8157661/amp/Britains-Incel-bomb-maker-told-friend-wanted-massacre-place.html>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

²³ Brown, M., 'Teesville Terror Fantasist with Interest in Mass Shooting Said He Wanted to "Massacre This Place"', *Gazette Live*, 27 March 2020, available at: <https://www.gazettelive.co.uk/news/teeside-news/teesville-terror-fantasist-interest-mass-17997453>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

²⁴ 'Sentencing Statements: HMA V Gabrielle Friel', Judiciary of Scotland (2021), available at: <https://www.judiciary.scot/home/sentences-judgments/sentences-and-opinions/2021/01/12/hma-v-gabrielle-friel>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

ballistic vest, and a large and high powered crossbow - for which he had ordered 15 additional 20 inch metal bolts with pointed steel tips. Friel was accused of being in possession of the items at various locations, including a community justice social work centre and the Royal Edinburgh Hospital - circumstances which were described in the charge as "giving rise to the reasonable suspicion" that it was connected to the "commission, preparation or instigation" of an act of terror, and for which he was found guilty by majority verdict.²⁵ Friel had reportedly become obsessed with researching mass murders carried out by Incels, with Dr Alexander Quinn, a forensic psychiatrist, stating that Friel had expressed "an affiliation" with Elliot Rodger.²⁶

Despite this, a verdict of 'not proven' was returned in linking him directly to an Incel-related ideological motivation for the planned attack. In November 2017, little over three years before his arrest, Friel stabbed a police officer several times at his college in Edinburgh. Police had attended the college following an alert over a text message received the night before, urging a friend to avoid college the

next day, stating "there will be an attack". Friel admitted the assault but avoided jail, receiving just 300 hours community service.²⁷ This earlier attack appears to further suggest an interest in 'school shooter'-related mass violence ideology in addition to the clear Incel ideological influence.

'School Shooter' Related Mass Violence Ideology

School Shooter related mass violence attacks are etched into our collective consciousness, often owing to the juxtaposition between the brutality of the attacks and the innocence of the victims. The perpetrators of such attacks continue to be cited as symbols of inspiration to the perpetrators of mass violence and terrorism today. In March 1996, 43-year-old Thomas Hamilton shot dead sixteen children and one teacher at a primary school in Dunblane, Scotland, before fatally shooting himself. Hamilton, a former scout leader, was removed from duty over concerns regarding his suspected sexual interest in young boys. Hamilton reportedly felt persecuted by the community over his removal from his

²⁵ 'Gabrielle Friel: Man Guilty of Weapons Haul Terrorism Charge', *BBC News*, 15 December 2020, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-55317874>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

²⁶ Mulholland, J; and Dave Finlay, 'Gabrielle Friel: 'Incel' Obsessive Guilty of Terror Charge', *The Times*, 16 December 2020, available at: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/gabrielle-friel-student-obsessed-with-incel-killers-convicted-under-terrorism-act-6lh2sbrwm?region=global&ni->

statuscode=acsaz-307, last visited: 01 February 2021.

²⁷ Brown, T., 'Stabbed in the Back: Cops Blast Police Chiefs After Unarmed Officer Stabbed by Crazy Knife Fiend at Edinburgh College While Armed Officers Held Back', *The Scottish Sun*, 9 July 2018, available at: <https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/2901593/cops-blast-chiefs-officer-stabbed-edinburgh-college/>, last visited: 01 February 2021.

scout duties, which was considered to be a possible motive for the attack.²⁸

In April 1999, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, 18 and 17 respectively, fatally shot twelve students and a teacher at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, before killing themselves. The pair referred to themselves as the “Trenchcoat Mafia”, boasted about guns and bombs, and are said to have hated black and Hispanic people – allegations supported by witness accounts of the pair seeking out non-white people during the attack. Suggestions of racist motives for the attack appear to be further supported by the relevance of the date on which the attack was conducted: 20 April – the birthday of Adolf Hitler.²⁹

Then in April 2007, Seung-Hui Cho, 23, shot and killed thirty-two students and teachers at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia. Cho mailed a package to NBC news prior to the attack containing a video and written statement in which he stated that he had been “backed into a corner”, and railed against his fellow students for being ungrateful and privileged.³⁰ More recently, in December 2012, Adam Lanza, 20, fatally shot twenty

first-grade students and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut. Although no clear motive was established, Lanza’s relative isolation at home playing violent computer games, while being surrounded by his mother’s firearms was said to have likely contributed toward his murderous intent. Lanza’s notebooks had uncovered writings about violence toward children, and his reference to paedophilia as “a form of love”.³¹

‘School Shooter’ Related Mass Violence Ideological Influence in the UK

Below are two case studies of individuals either convicted of offences under UK terrorism legislation, and/or other offences, where there is evidence of a ‘School Shooter’ related Mass Violence ideological influence.

Case Study: Kyle Davies

Kyle Davies, 19, of Gloucester, was sentenced to sixteen years’ imprisonment with an additional three year extended licence period for purchasing a handgun and

²⁸ Cusick, J., ‘Dunblane Massacre: Remembering the School Shooting 20 Years Later’, *The Independent*, 10 March 2016, available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/dunblane-massacre-remembering-school-shooting-20-years-later-a6923756.html>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

²⁹ ‘Sixteen Dead After High School Massacre’, *The Guardian*, 21 April 1999, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/1999/apr/21/usgunviolence.usa>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

³⁰ ‘Killer’s Manifesto: You Forced Me into a Corner’, *CNN*, 18 April 2007, available at: <http://edition.cnn.com/2007/US/04/18/vtech.shooting/index.html>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

³¹ ‘Documents Shed Light on Sandy Hook Shooter Adam Lanza’s tortured Mind’, *CBS News*, 10 December 2018, available at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/sandy-hook-newtown-connecticut-shooter-adam-anza-tortured-mind-documents-shed-light/>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

ammunition from a dealer on the dark web. In court, Davies was described by the judge as having the intention to endanger life in a shooting event.³² Officers from the South West Regional Organised Crime Unit (SWROCU) said they had stopped Davies at "phase one" of his plan and found no evidence to suggest that a target had yet been identified, but that the depth of research carried out was said to have left police in no doubt he was intending to "follow in the footsteps of the murderers he idolised".³³ Anders Breivik - the far-right terrorist who killed 77 people in a bombing and firearms attack against children and young people in Oslo and on the island of Utoya, Norway in 2011 - and Columbine school shooters Erik Harris and Dylan Klebold, were described as being "poster boys" to Davies.³⁴ His "deep and persistent" interest in mass shootings is believed to have developed during his A-Level studies.³⁵ Judge Cook described how officers searching Davies' home in Gloucester uncovered "disturbing and

chilling" research into mass murders - an interest described as an "obsession" - adding that the "graphic and unpalatable" material, including how-to guides on mass shootings and manufacturing explosives, ran into thousands of pages.³⁶ It was reported that Davies suffered from depression, which was attributed to him being bullied at school. Davies also exhibited signs of suicidal ideation, where in 2015 he reportedly visited a motorway bridge, from which he intended to commit suicide.³⁷ A clear combination of 'School Shooter' related mass violence and far-right ideology was exhibited by Davies, which culminated in his intention to perpetrate an act of mass violence with a firearm.

Case Study: Thomas Wyllie and Alex Bolland

Thomas Wyllie and Alex Bolland, both then 14, and of Northallerton, were sentenced to a combined 22 years imprisonment for conspiracy to murder.³⁸ Wyllie and Bolland had

³² Gloucester Teen Kyle Davis Guilty of Mass Shooting Plot', *BBC News*, 22 July 2019, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-49072284>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

³³ 'Gloucester Teenager Sentenced to 19 Years After Gun Seized and Mass Shooting Plans Discovered', SWROCU (2019), available at: <https://www.swrocu.police.uk/news/2019/09/gloucester-teenager-sentenced-to-19-years-after-gun-seized-and-mass-shooting-plans-discovered/>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

³⁴ *ibid.*

³⁵ 'Gloucester Weapons Charge Teenager "had deep interest in mass murderers"', *BBC News*, 8 July 2019, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-48912607>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

³⁶ Christian, B., 'Kyle Davies: British teen obsessed with mass shootings jailed for 16 years for ordering gun off dark web', *Evening Standard*, 13 September 2019, available at: <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/brit-teen-obsessed-with-mass-shootings-jailed-for-ordering-gun-online-a4236316.html>, last visited: 02 February 2021.

³⁷ Jenkins, R., 'Jury considers their verdicts in trial of "intelligent but quiet" teen who "planned mass murder"', *Gloucestershire Live*, 19 July 2019, available at: <https://www.gloucestershirelive.co.uk/news/gloucester-news/jury-considers-verdicts-trial-intelligent-3112554>, last visited: 03 February 2021.

³⁸ 'Regina v Thomas Wyllie & Alex Bolland', Judiciary of England and Wales (2018), available at: <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp->

planned to murder teachers and pupils at the school they attended in North Yorkshire, using firearms. Wyllie intended to steal from his ex-girlfriend's parents after murdering them. At sentencing, Justice Cheema-Grubb described the planned attack as being a "re-enactment" of the 1999 Columbine High School massacre perpetrated by Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold in Colorado, USA. In a diary found by police, Wyllie made his intentions clear, stating: "If this is found I have committed one of the worst atrocities in British history or I killed myself", and "F***, I hate my school. I will obliterate it. I will kill everyone."

In addition to evidencing disdain for the school, their teachers, and fellow students, the contents of the diary also evidenced the espousal of far-right rhetoric – suggesting the presence of a far-right ideology.³⁹ References to unaddressed school bullying had also been made by the perpetrators, suggesting this may have had a causal influence on their development of depression and self-harm, and likely played a significant role in their grievance formation and motive. A subsequent review of the case recommended that action be taken by the school to tackle bullying,⁴⁰ although the report was not published due to fears that information contained therein could identify vulnerable students.

content/uploads/2018/07/r-v-wyllie-and-bolland-sentencing.pdf, last visited: 02 February 2021.

³⁹ Dearden, L., 'Teenagers who plotted Columbine-style massacre at Yorkshire school jailed for total of 22 years', *The Independent*, 20 July 2018, available at: [https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/yorkshire-columbine-massacre-teenager-jailed-](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/yorkshire-columbine-massacre-teenager-jailed-northallerton-boys-latest-updates-a8456571.html)

[northallerton-boys-latest-updates-a8456571.html](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/yorkshire-columbine-massacre-teenager-jailed-northallerton-boys-latest-updates-a8456571.html), last visited: 02 February 2021.

⁴⁰ 'Northallerton 'Columbine' plot review urges anti-bullying action', *BBC News*, 2 September 2020, available at: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-york-north-yorkshire-54002384?intlink_from_url=&, last visited: 02 February 2021.

Conclusion

UK perspectives on extremist ideology and its role in motivating terrorist violence have thus far focussed largely upon Islamist terrorism. While the Islamist terrorist threat remains the single most significant such threat to the UK, the proscription of a number of Far-Right terrorist groups in the years since 2016 highlights the changing face of the terror threat.⁴¹

The rise of ‘Mixed, Unstable and Unclear’ ideologies epitomises the evolving threat. The ideological diversification and methodological appropriation inherent to the ‘Mixed’ component of this emergent ideological category presents significant challenges for the authorities – particularly so with regards to the accurate and timely assessment of threat and risk. The presence of multiple, concurrent ideological influences is likely not only to present additional layers of ideological and behavioural complexity, but is likely to result in an

overall level of threat and risk which exceeds the sum of its parts.

The prevalence of ‘Mixed’ ideologies in both the non-criminal (Prevent) space and the terror-offender (TACT) landscape is likely to increase further, and at pace.

Looking Ahead

This briefing paper offers an insight into just two ideological components (Incel and ‘School Shooter’ related Mass Violence) of ‘Mixed’ ideologies. It acts as a primer for a full research project to be completed by the author of this briefing on ‘Mixed’ ideologies in the coming months. It explores in depth a number of cases where individuals were convicted of offences under terrorism legislation (or other offences), where there is evidence of more than one ideological influence or adherence. The research project will make a number of recommendations for government on the assessment, identification and support provision for ‘Mixed’ ideological cases.

⁴¹ ‘Proscribed Terrorist Organisations’, Home Office (2013), available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/