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# **The Promises and Limitations of Using Municipal Community Policing Programs to Counter Violent Extremism: Calgary's Re-Direct as a Case Study**

Peter Ottis

International Relations



THE PROMISES AND LIMITATIONS OF USING MUNICIPAL  
COMMUNITY POLICING PROGRAMS TO COUNTER VIOLENT  
EXTREMISM: CALGARY'S RE-DIRECT AS A CASE STUDY

*By*

*Peter Ottis*

Ås, 2016



The Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Noragric, is the international gateway for the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU). Eight departments, associated research institutions and the Norwegian College of Veterinary Medicine in Oslo. Established in 1986, Noragric's contribution to international development lies in the interface between research, education (Bachelor, Master and PhD programs) and assignments.

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Peter.ottis@gmail.com  
Noragric  
Department of International Environment and Development Studies  
P.O. Box 5003  
N-1432 Ås  
Norway  
Tel.: +47 67 23 00 00  
Internet: <http://www.nmbu.no/om/fakulteter/samvit/institutter/noragric>



## **Declaration**

I, Peter Ottis, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature: .....

Date: .....









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## Abstract

The mobilization of Western foreign fighters to join the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has left governments in many countries searching for the most appropriate response. Calgary, Alberta in Western Canada has not been immune to this issue. On top of deploying ‘hard’ approaches (law enforcement and intelligence), Calgary has also embraced the ‘softer’ measures of early intervention and radicalization prevention. The latter category of programs is often labelled ‘countering violent extremism’ (CVE). This thesis examines one such CVE program – ReDirect – launched in September 2015 by the Calgary Police Service. ReDirect was chosen as a case study because it is the first dedicated municipal level, community policing, radicalization prevention program in Canada. The objective of this research project is to fill the gap in literature on Canadian municipal-level CVE programming. The study’s findings are largely based on fourteen interviews with people with in-depth knowledge of the program, which were conducted primarily during fieldwork in Calgary, Alberta in spring 2016.

The study finds that Canada’s framing of CVE as a *national* security issue results in an “intervention gap” on the radicalization continuum. Due to a combination of legislative, judicial, operational, strategic and political hurdles, none of the federal agencies working on CVE – the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Public Safety Canada – are able to intervene in early stages of radicalization. Municipal-level programs such as ReDirect provide one way to fill this critical gap. Calgary Police’s adoption of lessons learned from similar programs, its previous successes in community policing and the community’s buy-in suggest that ReDirect may work in reducing radicalization. However, the program also faces limitations. Given the localized nature of ReDirect, the primary determinant of whether a person can access its services is not their need but their postal code. Applying Nesser’s typology of a terror cell reveals that ReDirect will likely only work on a sub-set of individuals vulnerable to violent extremism. Of the four types suggested by Nesser (entrepreneurs, protégés, misfits and drifters), ReDirect would only succeed with the latter two. While ReDirect is the first program of its kind in Canada, its framework may not serve as an appropriate model for other jurisdictions to follow. ReDirect’s signature feature – the central role of police as a convener of government and civil society groups – works in Calgary because of several unique characteristics and may not necessarily prove suitable for other municipalities looking to create a similar program.



# Contents

Declaration.....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	x
Abstract.....	xii
List of Figures .....	xvi
List of Abbreviations .....	xviii
1. Introduction .....	1
1.1. The Calgary Nexus.....	2
1.2. Research Question .....	3
1.3. Thesis Outline.....	4
2. Methodology.....	6
2.1. Data Collection.....	6
2.2. Data Management and Analysis .....	10
2.3. Challenges and Limitations .....	11
2.4. Ethical Considerations.....	12
3. Theory .....	14
3.1. Radicalization .....	14
3.2. Terrorism as a Trajectory .....	15
3.3. Framing Theory .....	17
3.4. Typology of a Terror Cell.....	20
3.5. The Copenhagen School.....	23
3.6. The Welsh School.....	25
4. Canadian Federal Stakeholders in Counter-Terrorism and Radicalization .....	28
4.1. Canadian Security Intelligence Service .....	28
4.2. Royal Canadian Mounted Police .....	29
4.3. Public Safety Canada.....	30
5. Calgary Police Service and Community Policing .....	32
5.1. Crime Prevention and Reduction Continuum.....	33
6. An Overview of the ReDirect Program.....	36
7. Broadening CVE Approaches and Securitization Concerns.....	40
7.1. Politicizing Security – Broadening CVE Approaches .....	40
7.2. Securitization Concerns .....	42
8. ReDirect’s Distinctive Role, Perceived Strengths, Limitations and Transferability .....	47
8.1. The Distinctive Role of ReDirect .....	47

8.2.	Understanding Radicalization .....	54
8.2.1.	Focus on Behavioural Radicalization.....	57
8.2.2.	A Warning Note.....	59
8.3.	Perceived Strengths .....	59
8.4.	Limitations and Challenges .....	65
8.4.1.	Applying Nesser’s Typology to ReDirect .....	66
8.4.2.	Broadening CVE Approaches – A Warning Note.....	69
8.4.3.	Known Unknowns .....	72
8.5.	Program Transferability .....	74
8.5.1.	Across Municipalities .....	74
8.5.2.	Across Ideologies .....	78
9.	Conclusion.....	81
	References .....	88
	Appendix 1 - Overview of CVE Programs .....	94
	United Kingdom – Prevent Channel Program.....	94
	Denmark – The Aarhus Model .....	97
	Germany – Hayat .....	99
	Montreal – Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization .....	100
	Toronto – Focus Rexdale.....	102
	RCMP – National Security Awareness and Community Outreach.....	103
	Appendix 2 - Informed consent form.....	105



## List of Figures

Figure 1: The Canadian Federal Counter-terrorism Continuum .....	30
Figure 2: Calgary Police Service Crime Reduction Continuum.....	35
Figure 3: The ReDirect Process .....	38
Figure 4: ReDirect’s Multi-Agency Panel.....	39
Figure 5: Canada’s “intervention gap” .....	52



## List of Abbreviations

AQ	Al-Qaeda
CBSA	Canada Border Services Agency
CIRV	Community Initiative to Reduce Violence
CMPA	Community Mobilization Prince Albert
CPRLV	Center for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence
CPS	Calgary Police Service
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service
CVE	Countering violent extremism
INSET	Integrated National Security Enforcement Team
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISSP	Integrated School Support Program
MASST	Multi-Agency School Support Team
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NSIS	National Security Investigation Section
OPP	Ontario Provincial Police
PATS	Provincial Anti-Terrorism Section
PSC	Public Safety Canada
PVE	Preventing violent extremism
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SIRC	Security Intelligence Review Committee
SPVM	Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (Montréal Police Service)
SQ	Sûreté du Québec (National Police of Québec)
TPS	Toronto Police Service
VRU	Violence Reduction Unit
YARD	Youth at Risk Development Program
ZDK	Centre for Democratic Culture, Berlin, Germany



## 1. Introduction

For the last several years, countries in North America and Western Europe have struggled with the latest wave of foreign fighter mobilization. The Syrian conflict, as well as the more recent attempt to establish a “caliphate” by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), has captured the imagination of some Muslim youth from around the world, who now migrate into Syria and Iraq to wage jihad. Canada serves as no exception in this regard. In August 2016, the Government of Canada reported that approximately 180 individuals with Canadian connections are abroad and suspected of terrorism-related activities. More than half are believed to be in Turkey, Iraq or Syria (Public Safety Canada, 2016a).

In response to this latest foreign fighter mobilization, governments in Western Europe and North America have been looking for the most appropriate means of taking on this issue. Many governments have responded by not only fortifying the state’s ‘hard’ approach measures such as law enforcement and intelligence, but also by increasingly focussing on the ‘softer’ approach measures of early intervention and radicalization prevention (Romaniuk, 2015). This category of programs is often labelled with the umbrella term of ‘countering violent extremism’ (CVE).

This thesis will examine one such CVE program, ReDirect, launched in September 2015 by the Calgary Police Service (CPS). Its findings are based largely on primary source data collected during fourteen interviews with people with in-depth knowledge of the program. While municipal police forces have long played a role in radicalization prevention programming in other countries, such as Norway (Carlsson, 2015), it has not always been thus in Canada. Traditionally, Canada has framed counter-terrorism and CVE as *national* security issues which were addressed by federal agencies, such as Public Safety Canada (PSC), the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Municipal police forces have historically played a secondary role limited to contributing human resources to local Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams (INSET’s), RCMP-led national security investigative bodies.

The timing of this study makes the topic relevant for several reasons. First, ReDirect is the first dedicated municipal level, community policing, radicalization prevention program in Canada.<sup>1</sup> Canada’s shift from framing CVE as a strictly *national* security issue to a more comprehensive view (which includes municipal-level actors) is still at its infancy. All municipal programs, whether

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<sup>1</sup> Community policing is an organizational strategy centred on police-community partnerships to address crime and disorder (Whitelaw & Parent, 2010, p. 51). The approach relies upon the community to define problems and set their priority. It implies a commitment to helping neighbourhoods solve crime problems on their own, through community organizations and crime prevention programs (Skogan & Hartnett, 1997, p. 5).

Calgary's Re-Direct, Montreal's Centre for the prevention of radicalization, or the CVE component of Toronto's Focus Rexdale, have been launched in the last 18 months and their creation serves as an exception rather than the rule. Several Canadian municipalities are looking to these three programs as pilot projects and are debating adopting an equivalent model for their jurisdiction. Similarly, the federal government is planning to create an office of the National CVE Coordinator and still looking to define the scope and mandate for this office. Therefore, the first objective of this thesis is to help inform this discussion by analyzing the promises and limitations of municipal-level actors in a space traditionally served by Canada's federal agencies.

Second, this thesis aims to examine the strengths of ReDirect as perceived by the informants and investigate to what extent this model holds potential lessons learned for other jurisdictions looking to implement a similar, community policing radicalization prevention program, whether in Canada or internationally. Third, this thesis aims to fill a gap in existing literature on municipal-level CVE programming in Canada. As of the time of writing, no academic studies have been published examining Canada's municipal CVE programs.

### **1.1. The Calgary Nexus**

The creation of ReDirect can be traced directly to Calgary's experience with the foreign fighter mobilization to join ISIS and its affiliates over the last several years. This section will provide a brief background on some of these foreign fighters, and how the city's experience shaped ReDirect.

Social movement theory suggests the central role of group dynamics and friendship networks in influencing individuals' decisions to join a terror group and fight abroad (Sageman, 2011). Terror cells or foreign fighters tend to cluster rather than spread out proportionally across a population (Gurski, 2015; Haram & Zaman, 2014; Taub, 2015). One of the foreign fighter clusters to receive public attention in Canada was in Calgary. As the fifth largest metropolitan area in Canada, Calgary lies at the heart of Canada's hydrocarbon extraction industry. Throughout the 2000 and 2010's Calgary and Alberta were most well-known for serving as the economic engines of Canada (Canadian Press, 2014). However, by 2014 Calgary was also developing a reputation as the source of one of Canada's most active clusters of foreign fighters to join ISIS and its affiliates.

The Calgary cluster consisted of Salman Ashrafi, Damian Clairmont, Gregory and Collin Gordon, Farah Shiridon, as well as several other individuals who are yet to be publicly identified (Bell, 2014c; Stark, 2014). As tends to be the case with terror cells, though the members of the cluster were close friends, their biographies differed widely. Ashrafi was Muslim by birth, university educated, married with a child and held a high paying, prestigious job at an oil company when he departed for Syria in

the fall of 2012. In November 2013, he engaged in a suicide attack in Iraq that would kill him and 40 others (Bell, 2014b). Damian Clairmont was a troubled young, White convert. He suffered from bipolar disorder, was a high school dropout, had attempted suicide as a teenager and was homeless for a time. He left Calgary in late 2012, fought with the Al-Qaeda (AQ) affiliated Jabhat Al-Nusra, and was captured and killed by the Free Syrian Army in January 2014 (Bell, 2014a).

Several other Canadian foreign fighters not residing in Calgary shared a connection to the Calgary-based group. Mohammed El Shaer and Ahmed Waseem - both from Windsor, Ontario - spent time in Alberta in 2010 and 2011 before departing to join ISIS the year after. Waseem was injured fighting in Syria, returned to Canada to recuperate and then managed to disappear out of the country despite having had his passport seized by authorities (Bell, 2014d). In March 2015, Waseem was reportedly killed by Kurdish forces in Tal Hamis in northeast Syria (Quan, 2015). Meanwhile, El Shaer was arrested by the RCMP in June 2016 and put under a terrorism peace bond (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2016b).

There is also a link between the 'Calgary cluster' and Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury, the Canadian in charge of a series of terrorist attacks in Bangladesh. Chowdhury orchestrated the July 1, 2016 attack in Dhaka, Bangladesh which killed 29 people, and the July 7, 2016 attack in Kishoreganj, Bangladesh, in which four people died ("The most cunning of the lot," 2016). Recent research suggests that like Waseem, Chowdhury grew up in Windsor, Ontario but then relocated to Calgary, where he met members of the Calgary cluster. In either 2012 or 2013, Chowdhury travelled to Syria, and on to Bangladesh. The speed at which Chowdhury rose to become the leader of the ISIS off-shoot in Bangladesh suggests that he was sent by ISIS central (Amarasingam, 2016).

This realization that Calgary had become a cluster city for foreign fighters to Syria and other war theatres surfaced a lot of uneasy questions. How could a well-to-do city like Calgary with an economically and socially well-integrated Muslim population become an exporter of terrorists? What could be done to prevent this from happening in the future? With these questions as a backdrop, Calgary Muslim community leaders approached Calgary Police about helping devise a solution and ReDirect began to take shape (Frontline Staff Member 1, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

## **1.2. Research Question**

Through the use of ReDirect as a case study, this thesis seeks to examine the role of municipal, community policing early intervention and radicalization prevention programs. The study is guided by the following primary research question:

- What is the distinct role of *municipal* policing programs such as ReDirect in tackling the *national* security issue of radicalization to violent extremism?

Admittedly, the research question comes with underlying assumptions which require unpacking. First, the question uses the word ‘distinctive’ as a synonym for ‘unique’ or ‘specific’, with no implied value-statement attached. Second, the research question carries with it a systems-level view with the normative assumption that in a field as crowded as countering violent extremism (CVE), a program ought to have a unique role to play. For fear of sounding obvious, this assumption contends that for a project to be viable, its objectives, services and client base ought not to overlap with another initiative. Another way in which the research question was worded for informants was, “There are many actors involved in the CVE universe. What are the things that *only ReDirect can do*, that no other actor can?”

This broad research question was further broken down into the following four sub-research questions:

- What are the securitization concerns with ReDirect and how does the program aim to address them?
- How does the Calgary Police Service (CPS) understand the process of radicalization and how does this understanding inform its approach?
- What are the perceived strengths and limitations of the ReDirect municipal-level CVE program?
- How transferrable is the ReDirect model to other municipalities or across ideologies?

### **1.3. Thesis Outline**

This thesis’ examination of ReDirect is organized into nine chapters. Chapter 2 lays out the methodology used in the data collection for this thesis, with an explicit acknowledgement of the limitations associated with it. Chapter 3 offers a brief discussion of the term ‘radicalization’, as well as an overview of the theories utilized in the analysis of ReDirect: Terrorism as a Trajectory, Typology of Terror Cell and Framing Theory, the Copenhagen School and the Welsh School. This thesis posits that until recently, Canada framed countering violent extremism as an issue to be handled strictly by federal-level bodies. Chapter 4 provides a background on these federal agencies. Since the ReDirect program falls within the community policing framework at Calgary Police, Chapter 5 provides an explanation of how the Service operationalizes the concept and an overview of ReDirect’s sister programs in the Community & Youth Services Section. Chapter 6 provides a narrative of the process that makes up the ReDirect program. Chapter 7 begins the discussion on this study’s findings,



applying the Welsh School approach of politicizing security to analyze the recent broadening of CVE approaches in Canada and the Copenhagen School to highlight the securitization concerns associated with radicalization prevention programs. In chapter 8, the discussion of findings continues, analyzing the distinctive role of ReDirect, how ReDirect understands radicalization, the perceived strengths, limitations and challenges of the ReDirect model, and transferability of the ReDirect model across ideologies and to other municipalities. Chapter 9 restates the main conclusions and suggests possibilities for future research.

## **2. Methodology**

Methodological choices have a significant effect on how a researcher goes about the research process from deciding on research scope and aim, drafting research questions, selecting the right participants, collecting, managing, and analyzing, as well as interpreting and disseminating this knowledge. In other words, research methods carry with them specific clusters of epistemological and ontological commitments.

This study uses qualitative research techniques, a grounded theory approach, and follows constructivist tradition to answer the research questions. A qualitative research design was chosen because the study's objective is to focus primarily on the *how* and the *why* of radicalization prevention programs like ReDirect. The aim is to examine smaller but focussed samples to better understand a social phenomenon. As Johnson explains, qualitative studies probe "for deeper understanding rather than examining surface features" (1995, p. 4). The study employs a grounded theory approach, whereby theory is created *from* the data collected, rather than using theory as a point of departure for the formulation of a hypothesis (Bryman, 2012, p. 570). The research follows in the constructivist tradition because it focusses on the participants' understanding and perceptions of the social world and their interpretation of it, rather than observing the social world as a given (Charmaz, 2000, p. 521). This chapter will present how the collection, management and analysis of data, the limitations and challenges associated with my findings, and the ethical considerations in this research project.

### **2.1. Data Collection**

Following the adoption of a qualitative research strategy came the decision on research design. A case study stood out as the most appropriate approach to examining the promises and limitations of municipal CVE initiatives. The method involves systematically gathering enough data about a specific person, social setting, or group to effectively understand how the subject functions (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 425). The primary focus of a case study is to explore the underlying complexity and particular nature of the case being researched (Stake, 2011, p. 436). Applying Stake's typology, this study is an *instrumental case study*, since it is examined mainly to provide insight into a broader issue: that of the role of municipal police programs in radicalization prevention and early intervention.

Calgary Police Service's ReDirect program was chosen as a case study for several reasons. First, ReDirect is representative of a new direction in the Canadian approach to radicalization to violent extremism. Municipal police have previously not been involved in working on the issue of radicalization to violent extremism, since it was seen as a largely national security phenomenon and

dealt with at the federal level by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), and Public Safety Canada (PSC). Second, Canada's recent shift towards municipal policing initiatives is mirrored in countries across Europe and North America (Griffith-Dickson, Dickson, & Robert, 2014; Hemmingsen, 2015; Koehler, 2013; Meines, 2007; Ranstorp & Hyllengren, 2013; Romaniuk, 2015). Therefore, ReDirect lends itself to critical analysis against some of the successes and challenges of similar programs in other cities. Third, Calgary Police is the first municipal police force in Canada to establish a stand-alone, community policing program aimed strictly at radicalization prevention. As such, it is interesting to assess to what extent the perceived strengths and limitations of ReDirect may serve as a template for other jurisdictions looking to establish similar initiatives, whether in Canada or internationally.

For the most part, this study employed purposive sampling in its informant selection. Purposive sampling involves selecting samples based upon previous information and experience, thereby including samples which represent different knowledge and expertise (Berg & Lune, 2012). The main criterion for informant selection was their knowledge of Calgary's ReDirect program, community policing-based early intervention and prevention programs, or Canada's national security landscape. The second criterion was the informants' position relative to ReDirect. One of the objectives of data collection was to gain a comprehensive overview of the case by speaking with informants with a wide range of relations to the program. Such an approach would for the triangulation of data collected and thereby contribute to the validity of this thesis' findings.

Before starting with data collection, the informants were grouped into desired 'clusters':

- ReDirect frontline employees
- Calgary Police Service Executive
- ReDirect community partners
- Potential ReDirect clients / their families
- Federal government partners
- Representatives of similar programs

These clusters were further grouped into two categories: informants directly involved with the program and located in Calgary (ReDirect frontline employees, Calgary Police Service Executive, ReDirect community partners, potential ReDirect clients / their families) and informants further removed from the program (federal government partners, representatives of similar programs, academics), located in Canada and internationally.

Sgt. Paul Dunn, the Head of the ReDirect program, served as an intermediary between me and the informants in the first category, those located in Calgary and with a direct connection to the program. I reached out to informants in the remaining clusters directly through the professional and personal networks developed in my work on Countering Violent Extremism at the Embassy of Canada to Norway.

It is important to acknowledge that I did not interview ReDirect program participants for two reasons. First, the focus of the study was as much on organizational analysis (the program's place within the Canadian CVE landscape), as on the program's specific characteristics, perceived strengths and perceived weaknesses. Second, in deciding whether to interview ReDirect participants, I had to weigh two competing factors: client confidentiality and interview utility. Calgary Police Service was understandably protective of client identities. Though not impossible, I would have required a compelling justification to request meeting with individual clients (many of whom are underage and would have required a guardian present). Since no ReDirect client had yet gone through the complete process, and since clients' experience of the program was not one of the research questions, I weighed the potential utility of client interviews as insufficient to justify requesting this extraordinary access.

In addition to purposive sampling, I also undertook snowball sampling as the interview process unfolded. In snowball sampling, the informants initially chosen through purposive sampling propose other participants who have had the experience or characteristic relevant to the research (Bryman, 2012, p. 424). I benefited from informants' offers to put me in touch with individuals relevant to my research because of their experience with radicalization prevention. Of the 14 interviews conducted, three came about as a result of snowball sampling.

The core of primary source data collection took place in Calgary, Alberta, Canada from March 29 - April 1, 2016. Over the course of three days, I interviewed seven informants, whose testimonies form the core of the primary source data collected for this research project. The Calgary interviews were complemented by six telephone interviews, conducted over Skype between March 17 and April 22, 2016, and one in-person interview in Oslo on May 2, 2016. Telephone interviews allowed for greater reach in data collection: they allowed me to speak with informants in Ottawa, Toronto, and France, while located either in Norway or Canada.

The fieldwork in Calgary was purposefully scheduled for spring 2016, about six months after the 'soft launch' of ReDirect on September 15, 2015. This timing allowed me to examine a program which had overcome some of its initial difficulties, yet was still very fresh and relevant for research.

Furthermore, the launch of Calgary Police's ReDirect program coincided with a broader trend in Canada: several other jurisdictions are also introducing their own municipal-level early intervention and prevention programs (Toronto, Montreal), while the Canadian federal government has committed to creating an Office of the Community Outreach and Counter-radicalization Coordinator (refer to section 8.4).

The interviews were split between face-to-face and telephone interviews. All interviews were semi-structured in nature, aiming to strike the right balance between a certain degree of standardization (to allow for triangulation and to support the thesis' internal validity), while simultaneously maintaining a more flexible format with open-type questions. The interviews lasted between 37 and 87 minutes, with the mean average interview lasting 50 minutes. Of the fourteen interviews conducted, thirteen were recorded.<sup>2</sup> Recording interviews allowed me to re-listen to each discussion and to transcribe it as necessary. A potential limitation of the use of an audio recorder is that it may have introduced bias if informants did not share opinions they did not wish to have 'on the record'.

The interview guide used during the discussions was divided into two main sections: core questions (identical questions asked of each informant) and personalized questions (tailored for each informant's specific expertise). The structure of interviews and the interview guides were iterative, in that I changed my approach slightly as the data collection process proceeded.

One example of this iterative process involves the inclusion of an additional question at the very end of interviews. Before I left for Calgary to do field work, I conducted two Skype interviews. I used these as an opportunity to 'test drive' my questionnaires and to critically analyze them afterward, in hopes of improving the calibre of core interviews in the field. One change that came out of this process was the addition of a catch-all question at the end of subsequent interviews: "What is a key question that I have not asked you, which is vital for understanding this issue?" This question generated two types of answers: some informants used it as an opportunity to underscore their main points; others brought up facets of the discussion I had not anticipated and shared further information that was vital to the data collection.

One of the advantages of using semi-structured interviews is that the method allowed me the flexibility to pursue topics and questions not planned *a priori*. This method proved particularly rewarding in interviews with the two frontline ReDirect staff, who both shared significant details of their personal backgrounds to explain how they inform their approach to ReDirect.

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<sup>2</sup> One informant agreed to only speak anonymously and without the use of a recording device.

In addition to the primary source data collected through interviews for this study, I reference two pieces of information from events which I attended in a professional capacity as the Political Assistant at the Embassy of Canada to Norway. Section 8.4.2 discusses the proceedings of the Global Meeting on 'Preventing Violent Extremism through Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect for Diversity', organised by United Nations Development Programme's Oslo Governance Centre in Oslo on March 14 – 16, 2016. Section 8.5.2 discusses Norway's challenges with adapting the empowerment conversation to tackle the radicalization of potential foreign fighters. This insight was shared by Police Superintendent Bjørn Erik Øvrum of Oslo Police District at a bilateral meeting on November 16, 2015 at the National Police Directorate.<sup>3</sup>

Information provided by informants was complemented with secondary source data. One of the main objectives of this research was to situate Calgary's ReDirect program within a Canadian and international context. In addition, secondary source data collection was used to better understand the theoretical underpinnings of the ReDirect program by consulting literature on radicalization and violent extremism. This secondary source data also allowed the research project to surface possible weaknesses or challenges for municipal CVE initiatives such as ReDirect.

## **2.2. Data Management and Analysis**

All audio recordings, questionnaires and interview notes were stored digitally on my personal computer, in a password protected folder. Seven of these interviews were categorized as the 'core' of the research project and transcribed verbatim. The other seven interviews provided valuable background data for the most part and smaller sections directly relevant to the research question. These interviews were summarized in general notes, with only the sections deemed most relevant to the research question transcribed verbatim.

Transcribing audio recordings into a written format allowed me to utilize grounded theory's approach of coding the data. Coding consists of breaking down data into component parts, which are given names or labels. Coding allows the researcher to examine, compare, conceptualize and categorize the collected data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 61). These small sections of data form the building blocks of concepts and theories that are created from qualitative research. In this research project, I reviewed all the transcripts and coded sections based on the primary and sub-research questions. These coded sections were then amalgamated into documents based on theme, to allow for cross-cutting analysis of single issues across the informants.

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to section 2.3 for further discussion on this.

### **2.3. Challenges and Limitations**

The primary limitation of this research project relates to the very nature of qualitative research and the constructivist theory tradition in which this study was performed. The findings of this research are best understood as subjective perceptions rather than objective conclusions. Furthermore, this research project took on a grounded theory approach, selecting a small sample of informants to draw certain conclusions about the cases study at hand. The informants' experiences, while crucial to this thesis' findings, cannot be extrapolated into generalized theories, which limits the external validity of the conclusions.

Despite these limitations on external validity, this research project undertook steps to increase the credibility – or internal validity – of its findings, as suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1994). Specifically, this thesis employed triangulation (using more than one method and source of data in the study of social phenomena) in order to strengthen the validity of its conclusions. As was referenced in the sampling section above, I aimed to collect primary source data from informants across a wide range of relationships to the program. Second, I supplemented primary source data collection with secondary source data research to further enhance the internal validity of this project's conclusions.

A second limitation of this research project was its reliance on an intermediary for informant selection. As was noted in the sampling section, I provided Sgt. Dunn with the descriptions of the categories of informants (employees, community partners, parents of possible clients, etc.) for several of the 'clusters'. For these interviews, he served as a liaison, putting me in contact with the informants and helping with the meeting logistics.

This reliance on an intermediary may have introduced a bias in informant selection, as well as informants' testimonies. Sgt. Dunn may have performed convenience sampling for clusters where several individuals fit the desired profile (such as ReDirect community partners). It is possible that this convenience sampling had an effect on the informant selection, skewing towards individuals with positive views of the program. Community partners who view the program positively may inherently be more likely to maintain regular contact with the Calgary Police Service and Sgt Dunn. Inversely, it is possible that community partners highly critical of the program minimize their interaction with the Calgary Police Service.

Similarly, by using the head of the program as an intermediary and performing the interviews at Calgary Police headquarters, the informants' testimonies may have had a latent positive bias. I attempted to counteract the likelihood of such a bias by encouraging the informants to be as open

as possible and by underlining the flexibility in the consent agreement they signed - should they change their mind about speaking 'on the record' and with an audio recorder running.

Third, this research project faced some sensitivities related to working on an issue involving national security. ReDirect works strictly in a pre-criminal space and focusses on youth, both of which place a premium on client confidentiality. ReDirect frontline staff were very careful not to provide any personally identifying information or anecdotes. Similarly, one informant agreed to speak with me only under the condition of anonymity, without the use of a recording device or note taking. This arrangement allowed the informant to speak with candour on the topic.

Due to their reluctance to speak publicly on operational matters, I was unable to interview a local Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) officer or a member of the local Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) – led Integrated National Security Enforcement Team (INSET). These two bodies take the lead on security intelligence and criminal terrorism investigations, respectively. Their views could have provided a more critical assessment of ReDirect, since their mandates may occasionally place them at odds with the objectives of ReDirect. The objective of ReDirect – as with Calgary's other community policing programs – is to keep individuals out of the formal justice system (Police Executive, personal communication, March 31, 2016). For their part, CSIS and the RCMP might want to pursue intelligence and criminal investigations based on sensitive information to which Calgary Police would not be privy.

Fourth, ReDirect is a relatively new program. Certain parts exist only in theory and no individual has yet entered the program and 'graduated' on the other end. Like other intervention and early prevention programs, ReDirect faces challenges on key performance indicators.

Given these limitations, this thesis will not seek to make an objective evaluation of the program's effectiveness. Rather, it will focus on the program's *perceived* strengths and *perceived* weaknesses and challenges.

## **2.4. Ethical Considerations**

In regards to ethics in research, the underlying criteria for any action should be to do no harm (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 61). Stake cautions that in case study research "qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict" (2011, p. 447).

This research project aimed to maintain strict ethics through several means. First, I was clear in defining my role as a researcher and providing the informants with the scope and objective of my



research. This approach proved particularly important when I reached out to an informant who had previously provided relevant information in conversation outside the scope of this research. Section 8.5.2 discusses Norway's challenges with adapting the empowerment conversation to tackle the radicalization of potential foreign fighters. This insight was provided by Police Superintendent Bjørn Erik Øvrum of Oslo Police District at a meeting on November 16, 2015, which I attended in my professional capacity as the Political Assistant at the Embassy of Canada to Norway. When reaching out to Superintendent Øvrum later to seek permission to quote him, I explicitly identified how his quote is to be used and my role as a researcher writing a Master's thesis.

Second, I asked the informants for their informed consent before interviews. The form I provided informants (see Appendix 2) served as a starting point, and I was willing to accommodate informant concerns. As was mentioned in the limitations section, one informant in particular only felt comfortable speaking candidly without an audio recorder or note taking.

Third, I placed paramount importance on secure handling of personal data. Recent widespread personal data breaches serve as an acute reminder of the importance of maintaining high rigour when handling personal information (Sanders, 2015). I downloaded the audio files from my mobile phone to my computer at the end of every day. All audio files and transcripts were only stored on my personal computer in a password-protected folder, and were not shared with others nor stored on USB flash drives.

Lastly, the aforementioned parameters were duly approved by Norwegian Social Science Data Service before I began data collection.

### **3. Theory**

The following chapter will present the theories that will be used to analyze the study's findings on ReDirect, namely Horgan and Taylor's Terrorism as a Trajectory, Nesser's Typology of a Terror Cell, Framing Theory, the Copenhagen School, and the Welsh School. But first, it will provide a brief summary of the discussion around the term 'radicalization', since it remains a contested term within the academic community, and offer a synthesis and definition to inform the present study. Furthermore, this definition will inform the discussion in section 8.2, which will discuss specific policy implications of the Government of Canada definition and operationalization of the term.

#### **3.1. Radicalization**

Radicalization is a contested term due to its intrinsically normative nature: the adjective 'radical' can only be defined as standing in opposition to an *a priori* defined 'mainstream' (Sedgwick, 2010, p. 481). Definitions of radical can vary considerably over time and depending on cultural and political backgrounds. Recently, the United States came close to electing their first woman President in Hillary Rodham Clinton; less than 100 years ago American suffragettes were widely regarded as a 'radical' movement (McMillen, 2008).

Some academics are skeptical of drawing links between radicalization and violence. Jenkins differentiates between radicalization, which has to do with 'internalizing a set of beliefs' and Al-Qaeda-inspired violence, which calls for 'transforming oneself into a weapon of jihad' (2007, p. 3). Borum is similarly critical, concluding that there is no inevitable link between (extremist) political beliefs and (violent) political action. Not only will there always be far more radicals than terrorists, but terrorists do not always hold strong political beliefs. Therefore being a cognitive extremist is neither a sufficient nor necessary condition for becoming a terrorist. Borum further argues, "Some terrorists— perhaps even many of them—are not ideologues or deep believers in a nuanced, extremist doctrine" (2011, p. 9).

Within academic circles perspectives also differ on the end state of radicalization. When we speak of radicalization, do we refer to the process of acquiring radical thoughts (i.e. a cognitive process)? If so, radicalization must be understood as the holding of political ideas which are diametrically opposed to a society's core values. Or do we refer to behavioural radicalization, whose end point is violent action (Neumann, 2013, p. 878)? Each side of this fault line provides a vastly different policy prescription for governments wishing to tackle radicalization.

Given the Canadian context for the case study, this thesis will utilize the definition offered by Public Safety Canada (PSC):

Radicalization, which is the precursor to violent extremism, is a process by which individuals are introduced to an overtly ideological message and belief system that encourages movement from moderate, mainstream beliefs towards extremist views. This becomes a threat to national security when individuals or groups espouse or engage in violence as a means of promoting political, ideological or religious objectives (Government of Canada, 2013, p. 15).

Positioning PSC's definition within the context of the academic debate summarized above, two key characteristics emerge. In contrast to Jenkins and Borum, the Government of Canada understands radicalization to be a precursor to violent extremism. In regards to the fault line between cognitive and behavioural radicalization, PSC clearly sides with the latter, noting that radicalization becomes a threat to national security "when individuals or groups espouse or engage in violence".

### **3.2. Terrorism as a Trajectory**

Max Taylor and John Horgan conceptualize terrorism not as a psychological state of being, but rather as a process (Taylor & Horgan, 2006). The starting point for their analysis is a critique of past attempts to identify unique or personal qualities of terrorists as somehow being disconnected from context and history. Such profiling for terrorist root causes has led to a (thus far) futile search for "some qualities of specialness [that] exist within a specific group of terrorists, in terms of both what makes them alike as well as what presumably makes them different from the rest of us" (Horgan, 2008, pp. 83-84). Instead, they assert that terrorists are ordinary people "to the extent that they are not distinguishable from other 'ordinary' people" whose decisions are coloured by the context in which they find themselves (Taylor & Horgan, 2006, p. 588).

Horgan and Taylor place foremost importance on the question of why out of two people with the same socio-economic background (educational attainment, income levels, and other potential causal agents), one may choose to pursue terrorism while the other will not. Their approach focuses specifically on initial involvement with a terror group and on the factors that influence this decision. Once a person decides to belong to a terror group, Horgan and Taylor subscribe to Social Movement Theory's explanation of group influences playing a central role in defining a person's relationship to a terror group (Sageman, 2011). These include the power of the group, the content and process of ideology (or ideological control) and the influence of a particular leader (Horgan, 2008, p. 85).

Horgan and Taylor use a process-based approach to analyze the point of engagement or choice. They offer three process variables that relate to the engagement with terror groups: setting events, personal factors and social/political/organizational context (Taylor & Horgan, 2006, pp. 591-593). Setting events refer to influences stemming from an individual's past, which are effectively unchangeable, since they form the context from which the individual comes. These events offer correlational insights, but tend to be so general as to offer limited predictive value. While they contribute to the behavioural choices of an individual, they cannot be said in any meaningful way to cause a particular set of actions.

Personal factors represent the individual's specific psychological and environmental context at the time of engagement with a terror group. Important elements of these personal factors include an individual's emotional state (such as political or social disaffection), immediate experiences (such as perceived negative contact with security forces), or peer pressure. These personal factors vary from one person to another and will change as a result of the individual's experiences. While similar to setting events, personal factors are unique in their immediacy and prominence.

The broader social / political / organizational context refers to the characteristics of an individual's external social surroundings as they relate to political expression, ideology and the organizational expression of that ideology. These social, political, ideological, and organisational issues come together in terrorism to form an important and distinguishing quality, one which is missing from most other areas of society. In particular, this is the most significant different between criminal violence (violence for the sake of material gain) and ideological violence (violence for the sake of a belief, often times at the expense of material well-being). Horgan and Taylor assert that understanding this quality may be the 'holy grail' or radicalization studies, as it would allow one to understand the process that changes disaffected and troubled individuals into terrorists (Taylor & Horgan, 2006, p. 593).

In addition to these process variables, Horgan (2004) suggests six key risk factors that may predispose individual involvement in terrorism and suicide bombing. The first risk factor is 'emotional vulnerability' in terms of anger, alienation or disenfranchisement, synonymous with feelings of being culturally uprooted or displaced and a longing for a sense of community. Facing such feelings, an individual may find limited utility in seeking counsel from senior community leaders, since they represent the establishment. Instead, they may turn elsewhere (such as to the Internet) for guidance and clarity. Second, these individuals may experience dissatisfaction with their current activity, and feelings of futility regarding the usefulness of the conventional political system in bringing about meaningful change. Therefore, they see no choice but to engage in ideological

violence to achieve their desired objectives. Viewed through this lens, “terrorism is a necessary, defensive urgent activity against an offensive enemy perceived as bent on humiliating and subjugating its victims” (Horgan, 2008, p. 85).

Third, these individuals may adopt a global victimization narrative which frames the global Muslim population (the *ummah*) as under attack by the West in general. This narrative is coupled with strong identification with victims, whether real (at the hands of the military or police) or less tangible (such as the general plight of Palestinians or Muslims in Kashmir). Fourth, the person has to believe that engaging in violence against the state or its symbols is not inherently immoral.

Fifth, in order to remain a devout member of a violent extremist group (and potentially forego material comforts), the individual has to feel a strong, intangible sense of reward about what being a member of the movement represents. Horgan gives the example of suicide bombers, who come to believe that they will achieve more in death than they ever could in life. Similarly, long form articles and full page biographies in al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula’s *Inspire* magazine provide a platform to transform unremarkable young men into ‘martyrs’ and ‘heroes’ for the cause, which comes with heightened status, respect, and authority within the community.

The final crucial risk factor is kinship or other social ties to those experiencing similar issues, or already involved in the movement.

Reflecting on these predisposing risk factors, Horgan warns that it is a mistake to consider any risk factors in isolation because none is able to adequately explain the process of radicalisation to violence. Rather, one should consider them in combination as a useful framework capturing “openness to socialisation into terrorism” in order to better understand the process towards violent activity and the qualities specific to each individual's involvement (Horgan, 2008, p. 85).

### **3.3. Framing Theory**

Framing theory provides a constructivist approach to the study of radicalization to violent extremism by focussing on social construction of social phenomena and the dissemination of meaning. The theory stresses the intersubjective nature of social occurrences and argues that events alone do not speak for themselves. As with other constructivist approaches, the theory acknowledges that several competing versions of ‘reality’ may co-exist (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2008, p. 6)

Framing theory builds on Erving Goffman’s definition of a frame as a “schemata of interpretation” which allow for individuals to “locate, perceive, identify and label” occurrences within their personal surroundings, as well as the world at large (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). An individual’s frame is made up

of the person's interests, values and beliefs. Frames provide a paradigm for comprehending the social environment. They offer "a language and cognitive tools for making sense of events and experiences by interpreting causation, evaluating situations, and offering proscriptive remedies" (Wiktorowicz, 2004, p. 5). Furthermore, frames serve to provide a coherent narrative which informs an individual's understanding of the role and significance of new phenomena that may arise.

A social movement undergoes a similar act of framing, whereby it constructs and disseminates meaning. The movement's objective is to mobilize resources and gain adherents. To this end, the movement broadcasts its framing of the world, providing an explanation for problems, attributing responsibility for problems, offering solutions, strategies and tactics, as well as providing motivational frames. A social movement's success ultimately lies in the movement elites' ability to create and disseminate frames that align with a movement's followers (Crenshaw, 1992, p. 31).

Thus, social movements succeed in recruiting and mobilizing new members only when frame alignment occurs: that is to say, when the frames projected by the movement align with the frames of potential participants to produce resonance between the two parties (Snow & Benford, 1988). This frame alignment can occur in two ways, either passive or active. Passive frame alignment refers to a social movement coming across an individual whose frame already matches that of the movement. Active frame alignment occurs when a social movement actively works to change the frames of potential members, as to have them align with the movement's view of the world (Snow, Rochford Jr, Worden, & Benford, 1986, p. 464).

Quintan Wiktorowicz used Framing Theory as a departure point in a case study of the Al-Muhajiroun, a transnational Islamic movement based in the United Kingdom that supports the use of violence against western interests in Muslim countries and the establishment of an Islamic state through a military coup (Wiktorowicz, 2004, p. 2). Wiktorowicz argued that while Framing Theory provides a robust model for explaining the recruitment capabilities of a movement, it is questionable whether the theories can effectively explain why individuals join radical Islamic groups in particular. After all, these groups demand total adherence and submission to the movement's ideology, the abandonment of previous lifestyles, and carry with them a high risk of activism (Wiktorowicz, 2004, pp. 6-7).

Wiktorowicz therefore proposed an alternate, four-step process for drawing individuals toward value internalization and commitment to a movement. The first of these steps is a so-called cognitive opening. Wiktorowicz argues that upon initial exposure, most individuals will reject a radical Islamic movement as extreme, militant, or irrational. However, a crisis in an individual's life can produce a

cognitive opening that results in individuals being open to movements they would have otherwise rejected. The cognitive opening shakes an individual's certainty in previously accepted beliefs and renders an individual more receptive to the possibility of alternative views and perspectives. Wiktorowicz groups these crises into economic (losing a job, blocked mobility), social / cultural (sense of cultural weakness, racism, humiliation), and personal (death in the family, victimization by crime, family feuds) (Wiktorowicz, 2004, p. 8).

Wiktorowicz lists exogenous factors that determine the depth and breadth of cognitive opening to radicalization. He argues that the severity of the cognitive opening is affected by the level of cognitive sophistication, prior socialization, prior knowledge of the religion, countervailing pressures (such as friends opposed to the movement or family responsibilities), the composition of the individual's social networks, and the availability of alternative resonant ideologies (Wiktorowicz, 2004, p. 11).

Wiktorowicz's second step is religious seeking and frame alignment. Faced with a cognitive opening, a religious individual will search for an appropriate religious frame that provides meaning and helps resolve his discontent. Prior socialization, one's sense of self and one's social group all play a role in influencing the direction of seeking. An individual may either undertake this religious seeking alone, or may seek out a religious movement to foster this search. The movements Wiktorowicz describes are voluntary and are therefore not in a position to coerce potential new members. Rather, they engage in discussion and debate, attempting to convince the seeker that the movement's ideology provides logical solutions to pressing concerns (Wiktorowicz, 2004, p. 9). Since the seeker is most likely a novice to the religion, he is unlikely to have the nuanced understanding necessary to effectively counter the theological merits of the movement's frame. As such, they are likely to accept the movement's frame as a "good enough" explanation for their discontent.

Once frame alignment has occurred, deeper socialization occurs and an individual's understanding and commitment to the movement intensifies. Over time, the individual gets re-socialized so that one's self-interest is defined in accordance with the goals and beliefs of the movement ideology. This commitment is further cemented with the creation of new social bonds with fellow members that encourage individuals to sustain their involvement and continue training. The last step in Wiktorowicz's process is the formal joining of a radical Islamic group such as Al-Muhajiroun.

Wiktorowicz stresses that though the trajectory may appear linear and straight forward, in reality differences in exogenous factors can help explain why some individuals join radical groups, while others leave after initial involvement. In particular, cognitive openings do not only occur at the

beginning of the process, but may re-appear over the course of the trajectory. The re-emergence of these openings leads individuals to question their beliefs or contemplate values. If the cognitive openings are relatively minor, they merely serve to reaffirm the group's frame, which provides an elegant explanation. However, if the openings are more severe, they can lead individuals to question the group's ideology outright (Wiktorowicz, 2004, p. 11).

The advantage of a framing theory approach to radicalization is that like Horgan and Taylor above, the theory focusses on process rather than any innate personal characteristics, socio-economic profiles, or concrete list of political or economic grievances, which have been shown to have poor predictive value in explaining radicalization (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010, p. 802). The intersubjective and communicative process of framing an issue, rather than the issue in itself, is the key to understanding radicalization. In this regard, it provides an elegant explanation for why secular, well-educated and apparently well-integrated individuals may become attracted to violent religious extremism. The theory also readily explains the differing speeds of individual radicalization, in that some individuals need to develop a frame that aligns with a movement's frame, while other are already part of "sentiment pools" that share the grievances and attributional tendencies of violent extremists.

Lastly, framing theory's the constructivist understanding of reality means that it does not depend on static conditions for radicalization to occur. Rather, the model is able to account for dynamic changes to the environment as a result of potential feedback loops between social phenomena, for example the impact of counter-terrorism measures and media coverage on violent radicalization (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2008, p. 9).

The major limitation of framing theory is its singular focus on structural or group-level factors that contribute to a person's path to radicalization. While it is able to provide a satisfying explanation for the dynamics within social movements or groups, it does not offer any empirical clues as to the individual-level motivations that make some individuals more susceptible or resistant to engaging in violence than others. The theory is unable to differentiate between two people who experience a similar 'cognitive opening', one of whom may decide to join a radical group and eventually partake in violence and another, who may decide not to follow down the same path (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010, p. 806).

### **3.4. Typology of a Terror Cell**

Petter Nesser proposes a typology of a terrorist cell in Europe as a means of organizing the seemingly vast range of profiles of individuals who are attracted to violence in the name of ideology.



Nesser examined several al-Qaeda (AQ) associated or AQ-inspired terrorist cells that planned, prepared, and in three instances managed to launch attacks in European countries in the period of 1998 to 2006. Nesser's study focussed on the 'core' of each cell and was based on observations of what the terrorists said and did themselves, as well as how others depicted them (Nesser, 2006, p. 2).

Based on this study, Nesser proposes four distinct profiles of individuals that recurred in terrorist cells: an entrepreneur, his protégé, misfits and drifters. Nesser asserts that each of these four categories join violent extremist groups for different reasons and holds different motivations for resorting to violence.<sup>4</sup>

Nesser argues that at the nucleus of a terrorist cell is the entrepreneur, someone who "builds" a terror cell. These individuals proactively connect their cell with jihadi networks, and they proactively "recruit, socialize and train their cadre" (Nesser, 2010, p. 92). Entrepreneurs are in charge of its operational activities, and sometimes they have themselves received training overseas, be it in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Chechnya, Bosnia or other places. According to Nesser, these entrepreneurs are typically senior to and more experienced than their fellow cell members and socially better-functioning, often having wives and children.

The entrepreneurs are driven to violent extremism by a strong empathy for 'their people' and a strong sense of justice. Nesser argues that "they are not militants for their own sake, but out of what they consider a religious duty to defend others" (Nesser, 2010, p. 93). Entrepreneurs appear genuinely concerned with the situation of the global *ummah* and enraged by the suffering of Muslims in war zones. They embrace jihadism gradually through intellectual processes, activism and idealism. These individuals arrive at violence as a means of making a 'real difference' after frustrations with political affairs and poor prospects of having much influence through non-violent means.

The protégés share many of the same traits as the entrepreneurs, but they are junior and inferior to them. Like the entrepreneur, a protégé is also a devout idealist with a strong sense of justice, who embraces violence through a combination of loyalty to the leader and as a means of intellectually justifying their activism. Nesser adds that protégés tend to be "very intelligent, well-educated and well-mannered persons, who excel in what they do, professionally, academically and socially" (Nesser, 2010, p. 93). Despite these skills, protégés tend to be very young with limited life

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<sup>4</sup> Nesser stresses that his model represents "ideal types" and that his descriptions of character traits ought not to be considered professional psychological or psychiatric evaluations.

experience and are thus impressionable and quite easily manipulated by elders they respect, such as by the entrepreneurs.

Nesser notes that as proof of the entrepreneurs' and protégés ideological commitment to their cause, he was not able to find any examples of either category of cell member turning into an intelligence or law enforcement informant. Moreover, the entrepreneurs' and protégés do not appear to express any remorse for their actions in public trials or press interviews. This underlines their belief in terrorism as a legitimate means of achieving their ideological objective.

The third category in Nesser's typology is the misfits. These are individuals who may do less well socially and may carry with them criminal backgrounds. Their motivation for joining a terror cell lies less in ideological commitment and far more in coping with personal problems or out of loyalty to their friends. They may be friends or acquaintances of fellow group members and may join a tightly knit group with a strict ideology as a means of "straightening themselves out" from a life of crime.

Although misfits are rarely well educated, they are considered 'street wise'. They are often physically adept and may have violent tendencies. The misfits' dearth of ideological commitment mixed with their violent nature may sometimes lead to serious clashes with the entrepreneur. Because of their ability to 'get things done' on the black market, the misfits play a crucial role in acquiring materials such as weapons or bomb making ingredients for the group's planned attack.

Unlike the entrepreneur and protégé, the misfits' lack of steadfast ideological commitment means that they may be recruited by intelligence or law enforcement. Furthermore, Nesser found several examples of misfits renouncing terrorism's legitimacy following incarceration.

The last category in Nesser's typology are the drifters, or people who "go with the flow" and may find themselves becoming members of cells by being at the wrong place at the wrong time. Unlike the other three types, drifters' characteristics are not as easy to categorize, as they tend to come from a variety of ages, educational backgrounds and social standings. Their primary means of getting involved with terrorist cells is through social networks. They therefore they share the misfits' lack of clear ideological commitment. As a result of the drifters' "dubious devotion" to the cause, this type of individual is usually at the periphery of a group and is not entrusted with critical operational tasks (Nesser, 2010, p. 95).

Nesser's typology builds on previous similar projects: Willems (1995) was the first to propose a typology to analyze Far Right Extremism in Germany. Bjørgo (2011) later expanded the typology to make it independent of ideology. Like Nesser, he listed four types, three of which - the "ideological activists", "accomplices" and "socially frustrated" – coincide completely with Nesser's typology.

However, he also introduced a fourth type, "adventurers", who are driven primarily by the search for excitement, action and heroism (Bjørge, 2011, p. 9). Bjørge's objective in creating the typology was to better inform the creation of customized preventative measures based on type.

### **3.5. The Copenhagen School**

In post-Cold War Europe of the 1990's, a new strand of security studies in the constructivist tradition arose at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute. The so-called Copenhagen School was looking to address what it saw as the significant blind spots of traditional security studies, which focussed strictly on military force and interstate politics. The Copenhagen School instead called for a broadening of the concept of security beyond these traditional pillars and to include 'new' security issues into the discourse, including migration, climate change and trans-national crime. It argued that these contemporary issues posed a security threat to the Western state, yet were completely absent from traditional security studies.

Beyond broadening the sphere of modern security studies, the Copenhagen School is best known for introducing several concepts into the field including: securitization, security sectors and regional security complexes. This section will briefly outline all three of these concepts, but focus mostly on securitization, as it holds most direct relevance to the analysis of ReDirect.

Securitization is defined as the discursive construction of threat. It is the process by which an actor declares a particular issue, phenomenon or individual as an existential threat to a referent object and thereby allows for a suspension of ordinary measures (M. McDonald, 2008, p. 70). The process can be understood in terms of several constituent parts.

First, 'facilitating conditions' provide the appropriate background for securitization to occur. These conditions refer to the position of the securitizing actor (one of authority, such as an institutional voice or an elite), as well as conditions historically associated with the specified threat (Buzan, Wæver, & De Wilde, 1998, pp. 31-33). Second, the securitizing actor articulates an issue as a 'security threat', or undertakes a 'speech act'. Third, in order for securitization to occur, the speech act must be accepted by the audience. "Issues are only securitized if and when the audience accepts it as such" (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 25). If such acceptance occurs, the securitized issue moves out of the sphere of 'ordinary' (with its associated systems of checks and balances) and into a securitized sphere where normal politics is suspended and emergency measures may be used against the perceived crisis. By using language of security and threat, "a state representative moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means are necessary to block it" (Wæver, 1995, p. 55).

One of the key assertions of the constructivist securitization framework is to suggest that while the content of security is malleable (any phenomena can potentially be viewed as a threat), the logic of security is timeless and universal. In other words, the effects of securitization – the suspension of normal rules and the enabling of emergency measures – will be substantively the same across contexts (M. McDonald, 2008, p. 71). Furthermore, it is important to note that the Copenhagen School takes a normative stand, viewing securitization as a negative form of ‘panic politics’ (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 34). Securitizing an issue implies that the issue is dealt with in secrecy and is not subject to the checks and balances of a liberal democratic system. As such, Waever expresses a normative preference for de-securitization, removing issues from the security agenda (Waever, 1995, pp. 56-57)

The Copenhagen School lists five discrete security sectors or arenas in which securitization can take place: military, political, economic, society and environmental (Buzan et al., 1998, pp. 7-8). Each sector represents a venue for distinct security relationships to develop between actors. However, these sectors are not mutually exclusive – one issue can be securitized among more than one of these sectors. Global climate change and the consequent warming in the Arctic represent an example of an issue that has been securitized across sectors. The rapidly changing climate has not only surfaced issues of food security for Arctic inhabitants, but also economic security with the growing potential of seasonal shipping routes and military/political security with countries’ sovereignty being challenged by adversaries.

Regional security complexes are defined as sets of units whose security processes and dynamics are so inter-twined as that their security problems can neither be analyzed nor resolved apart from one another (Buzan & Waever, 2003, p. 44). Buzan and Waever argue that a regional level of analysis in security studies provides the most useful lens to study global security dynamics, rather than a state-centric or a global level of analysis.

The Copenhagen School has been subject to critique from several quarters. First, it has been criticized for providing a very narrow framework, necessitating a binary choice between issues that are securitized and unsecuritized, and offering little in between (M. McDonald, 2008, p. 71). Who serves as the audience to provide the legitimacy for a securitization act? Is it always the public at large, or is it sometimes limited to the political or professional class? How ought we to class longer-term strategic security issues that are neither subject to a speech act nor on the forefront of the audiences’ mind?

Second, critics argue that while the School takes a constructivist approach, its definition of the characteristics of 'securitized' issue are most unconstructivist (Booth, 2005). That is to say, the Copenhagen School offers little room for interpretation or intersubjectivity in its description of the secrecy, urgency and panic politics involved when an issue is securitized.

Third, critics charge that by voicing a strong normative preference for de-securitization at the heart of the project, the Copenhagen School oversteps its role as a descriptive and explanatory theory (M. McDonald, 2008, p. 71). In this regard, the School shares perhaps more in common with critical theories, which share this strong normative outlook, as opposed to more traditional strains of International Relations, which pursue a more agnostic approach to the subject matter.

### **3.6. The Welsh School**

The Welsh School is borne out of the traditions of Critical Theory, established to counter the approach taken by so-called traditional, problem-solving theories. It argues that traditional theories of international relations - such realism or neo-realism - accept the world they inherit and aim to make it work, all the while replicating that which exists. Traditionalist theories argue that since human society belongs to nature, the well-established methods of the natural sciences can be transposed into the study of human society.

In contrast, a critical theory approach aims to peel back the layers on social phenomena and call into question prevailing social and power relationships and institutions (Cox, 1981, p. 128). The defining feature of critical approaches is that they are post-naturalist – that is to say, they reject the notion of studying human social behaviour with the same precision that one can study glaciers (Booth, 2005, p. 10). Critical theorists posit that naturalist theories – although they present themselves as objective – are not void of perspective and intention. In the words of Robert Cox, “Theory is always *for someone for some purpose*” (1981, p. 128).

The tenets of traditional international relations theories reflect the philosophical backgrounds and normative preferences of the individuals who created them – privileged, mostly-White men living in Western Europe and North America in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Critical theorists insist that there is no inherent reason for discussion of security in international relations to be state-centric, power-centric, militarized. Realism can be said to accurately *describe* events in the 20<sup>th</sup> century because the people who advocated for a realist approach were the same people who *constructed* that reality in world politics (Booth, 2005, p. 5).

The Welsh School goes beyond critiquing the realist approach. It also engages with the present, while never losing sight of the historical processes that produced the current situation. Such an

approach breaks down the delineation between subjects and objects, observer and observed, and lays bare the role played by theories and theorists in changing the very world which they aim to objectively observe (Bilgin, 2008, p. 93).

The Welsh School thus takes issue with traditional theories' state-centric normative position that treats the state as the ultimate referent object. Such a state-centric approach to security overlooks human agency and misses the negotiations and give-and-take that occur at sub-state levels and ultimately constitute 'state policy'. The Welsh School is equally critical of traditional theorists' attempts to apply state-centric analysis to non-state actors or social movements. They argue that to treat these groups as static and unitary objects without examining their internal dynamics and constitutive nature is to completely misunderstand them.

The Welsh School provides an intersubjective view of security, arguing that security is a derivative concept: one's definition of security is defined by one's political outlook and philosophical worldview. Admittedly, this means that contending theories of world politics produce different conceptualizations about what security means in world politics. While there is a more established definition of security on a personal level, namely being or feeling safe from threats and danger, security in politics has no final meaning (Booth, 2005, p. 13). Furthermore, security is an instrumental value that guards against the tendency to treat it as an endpoint rather than as a process through which people find meaning as they navigate through history (Booth, 2005, p. 119).

Security ought to be defined from the bottom up, which requires a *deepening* of the concept of security. This deepening requires embracing a more extensive ontology in security studies, one that goes beyond the state and includes referents at both the sub-state level (individuals, communities, regions), as well as the inter-state level. Like the Copenhagen School, the Welsh School similarly calls for a *broadening* of the security studies agenda beyond militarized and state-centric orthodoxy. It urges security studies to consider a wide range of insecurities faced by a wide range of referent objects.

However, unlike the Copenhagen School, the Welsh School does not attempt to 'securitize' quotidian political and social issues within a fundamentally neo-realist framework (Booth, 2005, p. 15). Instead, it aims to turn every security issue into a political issue (a process called *politicizing security*). The objective of politicizing security is to reveal the political, constitutive nature of security thinking. In other words, the Welsh School analyzes security thinking and scrutinizes its use in practice. Such an approach allows for a more nuanced analysis of security issues that goes beyond the binary approach of the Copenhagen School (securitization / de-securitization). Furthermore, the

Welsh School does not share the Copenhagen School's strong normative preference for de-securitization. It is agnostic about whether framing something as a security issues is inherently good or bad. For example, the Welsh School cites global epidemics, such as the 2013 – 2016 Ebola outbreak, as phenomena that benefitted from being framed as security issues requiring a coordinated international effort (Bilgin, 2008, pp. 98-100).

The final objective of the Welsh School is to widen the definition of security from merely freedom from threat to emancipation. Emancipation is the freeing of people (as individuals and groups) from "those physical and human constraints which stop them carrying out what they would freely choose to do" (Booth, 1991, p. 319). Booth provides a non-exhaustive list of these constraints, which include: war and the threat of war, poverty, poor education, and political oppression. He asserts that "security and emancipation are two sides of the same coin" (Booth, 1991, p. 319). This definition directly addresses the security dilemma at the heart of traditional security studies. Specifically, the Welsh School rejects their zero-sum view of the world, in which one state's security equals another state's insecurity.

Critiques of the Welsh School are centred on the concept of security as emancipation. The biggest limitation of its approach is a lack of conceptual clarity as to the limits of security. The Welsh School does not offer guidelines for when an issue is not a security issue, thus always implying the more security, the better. If however, all issues are framed in security terms, what then is the value of framing anything as a security issue? (Floyd, 2007, p. 333)

## **4. Canadian Federal Stakeholders in Counter-Terrorism and Radicalization**

As this thesis contends, Canada has understood radicalization to violent extremism – until recently – as a largely *national* security issue and therefore handled by stakeholders at the federal level.<sup>5</sup> Chapter 8 will discuss the implications of municipal actors, such as the Calgary Police Service, getting involved in a space that has largely been occupied by federal-level agencies. To inform this discussion, the following chapter will provide a brief background on the three main agencies working in the federal radicalization and counter-terrorism landscape.

### **4.1. Canadian Security Intelligence Service**

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) is Canada’s security intelligence agency. Pursuant to s. 12 of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act (CSIS Act), its role is to “collect, by investigation or otherwise [...] information and intelligence respecting activities that may on reasonable grounds be suspected of constituting threats to the security of Canada and [...] advise the Government of Canada ("Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act," 1985). CSIS’ work in counter-terrorism is mandated by section 2(c) of the CSIS Act, which defines ‘threats’ to Canada as “activities [...] directed toward or in support of the threat or use of acts of serious violence against persons or property for the purpose of achieving a political, religious or ideological objective” ("Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act," 1985).

CSIS is a civilian agency which collects intelligence for the purpose of advising government and not evidence for the purposes of criminal prosecution. The Service possesses no enforcement powers of compulsion or detention. It was created in 1984 based on the recommendations of the McDonald Commission (Commission of Inquiry Concerning Certain Activities of the Royal Mounted Police), which recommended that the security intelligence mandate should fall to a civilian agency separate from police function (J. D. McDonald, 1981).

As an intelligence agency tasked with strictly preventative investigations, CSIS has the authority to begin investigations at the relatively low threshold of “reasonable grounds to suspect” that an individual or a group poses a threat to the security of Canada. Note the Service’s explicit mandate to “report to and advise the Government of Canada” - the mandate’s policy implications in regards to radicalization prevention will be addressed in Chapter 8.

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<sup>5</sup> Keen students of the Canadian radicalization and counter-terrorism landscape may note that Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) runs a Provincial Anti-Terrorism Section (PATS). However, this thesis will forego discussion of this provincial-level body, as PATS currently stands out as an exception.



## 4.2. Royal Canadian Mounted Police

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is both a federal and a national police force of Canada. The RCMP provides law enforcement at a federal level in Canada, and also on a contract basis to provinces, territories, and over 150 municipalities (Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2016). The RCMP's diverse mandate includes preventing and investigating crime, maintaining peace and order, enforcing laws, contributing to national security, and providing operational support services to other police and law enforcement agencies ("Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act," 1985).

In the realm of counter-terrorism, the RCMP is the lead body responsible for criminal investigation and prosecution. The RCMP begin working when there are "reasonable grounds to believe" that a criminal offence under section 83 of the Criminal Code has been committed. As Justice Dennis O'Connor points out,

A significant portion of the national security-related information and intelligence that the RCMP receives comes from CSIS; thus, a significant amount of the RCMP's national security work is initiated by information received from CSIS. The CSIS / RCMP memorandum of understanding (MOU) requires CSIS to provide the RCMP with information and intelligence that may assist the RCMP in fulfilling its national security-related responsibilities (O'Connor, 2006, p. 139).

Once the RCMP establishes that a criminal threshold has been met, it pursues a separate but parallel investigation which starts from afresh and gathers criminal evidence rather than intelligence. The RCMP works in a forensic environment: evidence must be collected in a manner which renders it admissible in court and therefore subject to public disclosure in the course of criminal prosecutions. In contrast, CSIS relies on information from many sources, including foreign governments and intelligence agencies and covert domestic sources. According to former CSIS Assistant Director Ray Boisvert, these sources must remain protected if CSIS is to remain an effective organization: "CSIS cannot simply turn over intelligence to the RCMP. The RCMP must always start from scratch so that intelligence is not the poisoned fruit of an investigation" (Gibson, 2013).

On an organizational level, RCMP National Headquarters is responsible for coordinating virtually all activities relating to the RCMP's national security mandate. Much of the investigative work on national security matters is done at the regional level. This work is undertaken by Integrated

National Security Enforcement Teams (INSET's).<sup>6</sup> INSET's are teams made up of RCMP members and personnel seconded from other police forces and government agencies (such as Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), CSIS, as well as provincial and municipal police services) (O'Connor, 2006, p. 85).

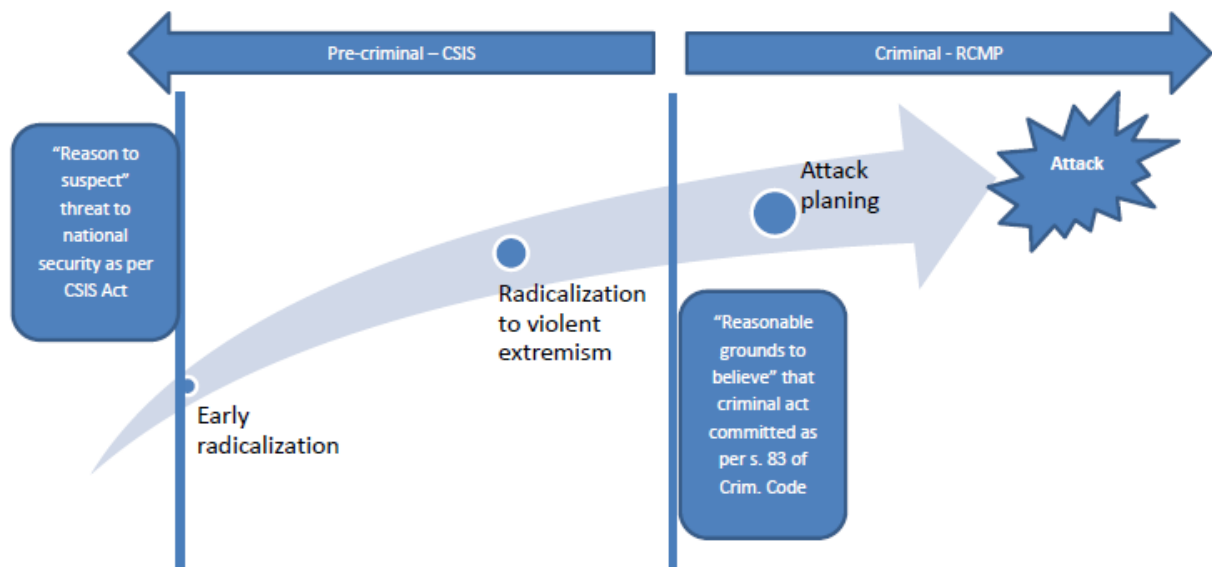


Figure 1: The Canadian Federal Counter-terrorism Continuum

### 4.3. Public Safety Canada

Public Safety Canada (PSC) is the federal department in charge of setting a unified strategic direction and coordinating actions across all federal departments and agencies responsible for the national security and safety of Canadians (Public Safety Canada, 2016b). PSC works directly with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), the Parole Board of Canada (PBC), CSIS and the RCMP.

In 2012 PSC published *Building Resilience Against Terrorism*, Canada's first Counter-terrorism strategy. The report laid out Canada's national approach to countering terrorism with the objective of setting out basic principles to underpin the government's activities. The strategy sets four pillars: *Prevent*, *Detect*, *Deny* and *Respond*. The *Prevent* pillar focusses the government's efforts on addressing the factors that may motivate individuals to engage in terrorist activities. *Detect* engages investigation, intelligence operations and analysis to identify terrorists, terrorist organizations and their supporters. The *Deny* pillar encompasses intelligence and law enforcement actions which can deny terrorists the means and opportunities to pursue terrorist activities. This includes efforts to

<sup>6</sup> INSET's are located in Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa, Edmonton/Calgary and Montreal. RCMP divisions without an INSET have a National Security Investigation Section (NSIS), which carries out the same function, but is not integrated with other agencies.

make Canada and Canadian interests a more difficult target for would-be terrorists. Lastly, *Respond* serves to focus the government's efforts on a post-terror attack scenario. Under this pillar, PSC provides a strategy for developing Canada's capacities to respond proportionately and rapidly to terrorist activities and to mitigate their effects (Government of Canada, 2013, pp. 2-3).

Canada's efforts to counter violent extremism (CVE) fall under the first pillar of *Prevent*. While seemingly equal in importance in the report, Chapter 8 will examine how the federal government's national security priorities emphasized certain pillars over others, and how this approach opened up the aforementioned "intervention gap".

## **5. Calgary Police Service and Community Policing**

The following section will briefly summarize Calgary Police Service's approach to community policing. Since ReDirect is situated in a context of a robust community policing framework within the Calgary Police Service, it is important understand Calgary's history with community policing and the role this strategy plays in the Service's mandate.

Community policing has informed the service's role within the community since the late 1970's (Police Executive, personal communication, March 31, 2016). Calgary Police does not see itself as an independent entity responsible for law enforcement, but rather as an actor within a wider network of government partners with the ultimate goal of ensuring citizens' welfare. The police's objective is not to strictly employ punitive measures but rather work with municipal and provincial social and health service providers to try to decrease or eliminate the underlying factors that lead to deviance and criminality. This approach takes a wider, system-level view with the goal of decreasing the economic strain of these 'high end users' across government agencies. "[We know that] if the Calgary Police Service is dealing with [these people] a lot, then so is Alberta Health Services, the education board, etc. All other systems are being impacted" (Police Executive, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

The Police Executive's commitment to the preventative policing model is underscored by personal frustrations as a young officer:

I was working [as a frontline officer] on the streets for about 15 years. People that I was dealing with who were kids when I first came out of police college were the same people who I was dealing with ten years later as adults. How many of those people could have been prevented from going down that road? (Police Executive, personal communication, March 31, 2016)

CPS' former chief Rick Hanson was particularly active in increasing the size of the Youth and Community Services section and introducing a range of early intervention and crime prevention programs aimed at children and young adults. Many of these programs were set up along a 'community hub' model, where the program brought together a range of government organizations and civil society partners to approach the issue in a multi-disciplinary way (Police Executive, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

This transformation experienced its fair share of growing pains. “Many of the partners [had to be] pulled together kicking and screaming” (Police Executive, personal communication, March 31, 2016). However, anecdotal evidence of the programs’ successes, as well as positive third party evaluations, have raised the profile of CPS’ crime prevention programs to the point that “everyone in Calgary wants to partner with the police. It’s a good problem to have” (Police Executive, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

The primary lesson learned in CPS’ embrace of a community policing model is that the strategy represents a long term investment and one which may not bear fruit for several years. While the rollout took time, this slow pace was necessary to ensure the credibility of the police service’s commitment to community policing. Today, forty years into this project, Calgary Police Service serves as the cornerstone for many community projects and holds the highest approval rating of any police force in Canada (Kaufman, 2013).

### **5.1. Crime Prevention and Reduction Continuum**

At a strategic level, Calgary Police Service’s (CPS) approach to policing is guided by the Crime Prevention and Reduction Continuum, which provides an easy, visual representation of the wide-ranging role CPS sees for itself within the community it serves and protects. The continuum suggests the Service understands its responsibilities as not only a law enforcement body, but also a convenor of government agencies and civil society groups.

At first glance, the continuum displays the emphasis that the Service places on crime prevention and education, as well as crime reduction, early intervention and treatment. The so-called ‘hard approach’ of law enforcement – though key to the functioning of any policing force – represents but one piece of the puzzle.

Within the umbrella of Community and Youth Services, the CPS runs a range of programs aimed at crime reduction through early intervention. The Integrated School Support Program (ISSP) is a prevention-based initiative focussed on two elementary schools located in an economically-depressed neighborhood in Calgary (Kaufman, 2014). The program’s objective is to ensure students and their families receive the necessary supports in the school, including a positive police presence, on-site psychologist, physical education specialist, social worker, access to a health clinician, breakfast and lunch programs, and after school programs (Calgary Police Service, 2016a).

Similar programs include the Multi-Agency School Support Team (MASST), which works with children from kindergarten to grade 6 (ages 5 – 12) who exhibit high risk and negative behaviour or are at the risk of victimization, and Youth at Risk Development Program (YARD), a community-based, early

intervention initiative that supports youth aged 10 – 17 who are at risk of gang involvement. Like MASST, each team consists of police officers paired up with social workers (Calgary Police Service, 2016c).

# CRIME PREVENTION & REDUCTION CONTINUUM

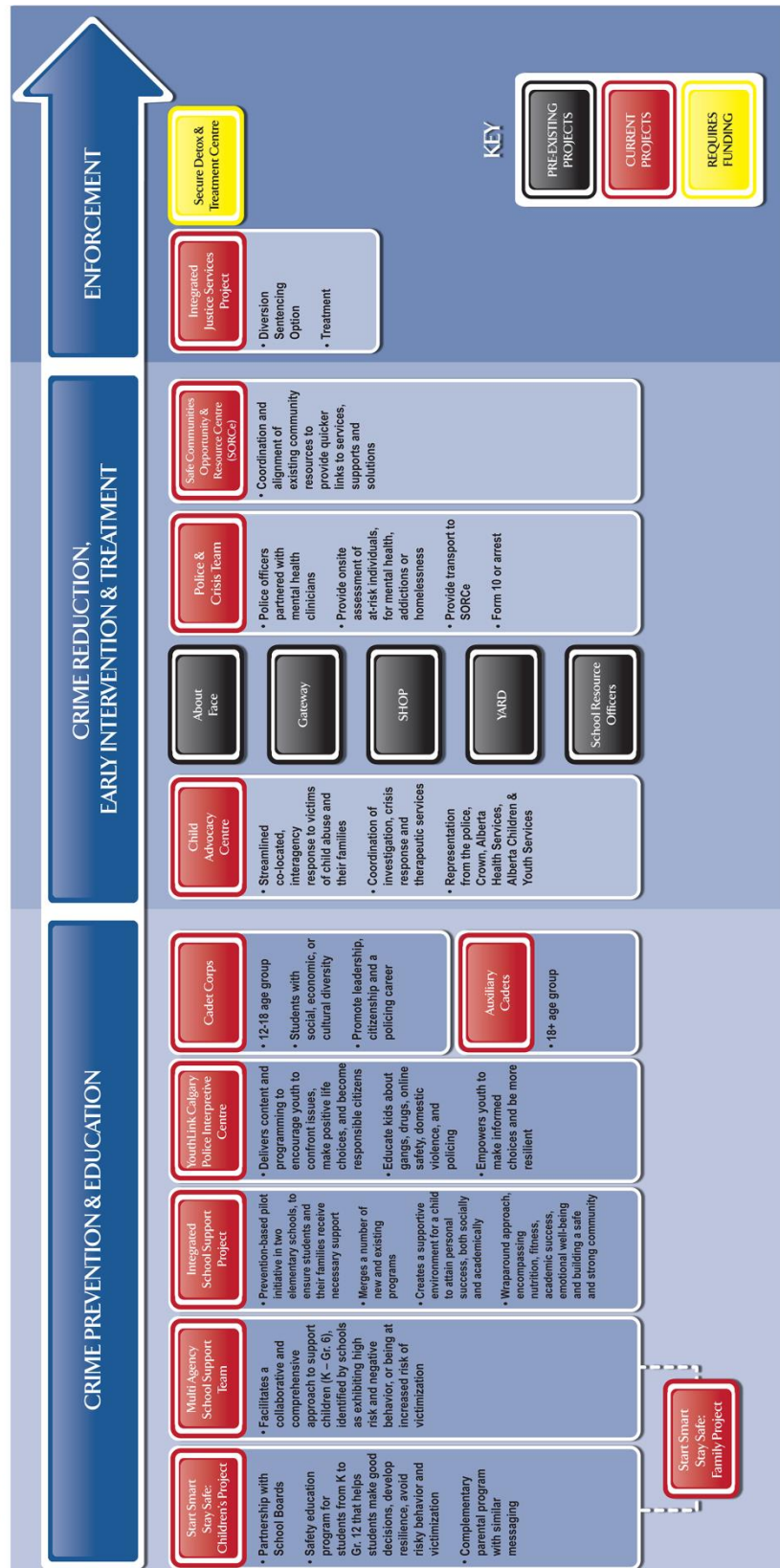


Figure 2: Calgary Police Service Crime Reduction Continuum

## **6. An Overview of the ReDirect Program**

ReDirect is an education, awareness and prevention program aimed at stopping the radicalization of young people toward violent extremism. The program uses community relationships to establish multi-disciplinary solutions to tackle the underlying vulnerabilities that influence a young person. ReDirect is housed within Calgary Police Service's (CPS) Community and Youth Services Section, which brings together community partners in multi-disciplinary teams. The ultimate goal of community policing programs like ReDirect is to "keep individuals out of the formal justice system and, if possible, treat the underlying causes of criminal and/or offending behaviour" (Calgary Police Service, 2016b). The program consists of two broad strands: education and awareness, and early intervention and prevention.

At the outset, it bears noting that while the program structure has been established, ReDirect is still in its early days. There have not been any clients that have 'graduated' from ReDirect, and as such, there are steps in the program which will be described as "where [the program] envisions finally getting to" (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016). This section will ensure to highlight which processes and procedures exist only on paper at this point.

Under the education and awareness strand, ReDirect targets young people and community groups and individuals. The project aims to provide young people a safe, enabling environment to debate, discuss and learn about radicalization to violence. The section also organizes outreach and awareness events for local individuals and organizations to help them understand the nature of the threat at the local and national level.

The core focus of the ReDirect program is its early intervention and prevention program, in which young people who exhibit vulnerabilities to radicalization are provided an individualized support plan. ReDirect provides a multi-agency wraparound approach, in which a variety of government and community stakeholders address an individual case. In this respect, it is similar to other CVE programs internationally and the municipal level-programs in Toronto and Montreal (see Appendix 1 for a fuller discussion of these programs).

The first step of ReDirect is referral, whereby a potential client comes to the attention of the program. The program accepts referrals from concerned parents and family member, schools, youth centres, health services providers, the private sector and fellow law enforcement services. The program currently runs a dedicated referral phone number, email address, and has a referral form on program's website. Despite the structure of the form, the Program Coordinator is keen to underline that, "[ReDirect] is very conscious that we're not using checklists. It's not about how many



boxes a person may check, but it's all about the context that surrounds them" (Personal communication, March 31, 2016).

Once a case is referred to the program, it is processed by the ReDirect Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator performs an initial assessment and triage along three criteria: *engagement* with a group, cause and ideology, *intent* to cause harm and *capability* to cause harm. The coordinator consults Calgary Police Service holdings, as well as any pertinent information from ReDirect's partner agencies. The team also meets with the family and the potential client to perform a more direct initial assessment.

The initial assessment concludes with three possible avenues of action. First, the case may be found to have nothing to do with radicalization. ReDirect Frontline Staff Member 1 concedes that, "We've had [the experience], unfortunately, where a certain kind of race or certain ethnicity can be automatically associated with ReDirect" (Personal communication, March 30, 2016). In other words, ReDirect has been perceived by some community members and partners as simply a youth program for teenagers from certain ethnic backgrounds. In such cases, the client may be referred to another program within the community or one of ReDirect's sister programs: the Multi-Agency School Support Team (MASST) or the Youth at Risk Development (YARD) program.

Second, the initial assessment may find that the person crossed a criminal threshold. If that is the case, Calgary Police is required to hand over the case to its operational and investigative sections. However, "that threshold line isn't like a fixed line in the sand. It's very context-specific on what they've done" (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016). Furthermore, the efforts of ReDirect and CPS' investigative teams are not mutually exclusive: just because an initial assessment has found criminality and an investigation has begun, this does not mean that ReDirect will not continue to be involved.

Third, the assessment may find that the person referred fits within the program's parameters. The case is then passed on to the behavioural sciences unit, a group of in-house psychologists who assess the case with professional judgement tools.

Once the ReDirect team has performed this series of assessments, the case is handed over to the multi-agency panel (MAP). The MAP is a catch-all term for three bodies: the case planning team, the strategic committee and the community advisory committee. Of the three, the case planning team is the first to receive the case. The team comprises community and government partners, including local school boards, Alberta Health Services, Calgary Community and Neighbourhood Services, correctional service workers from the Office of the Solicitor General and Public Security in Alberta,

among others. These government partners provide pertinent information their agency may hold on the ReDirect client. Second, they contribute to the creation of an individualized support plan. Third, they are able to access resources within their own sphere of influence. In short, members of the case planning team deal with micro-level case management.

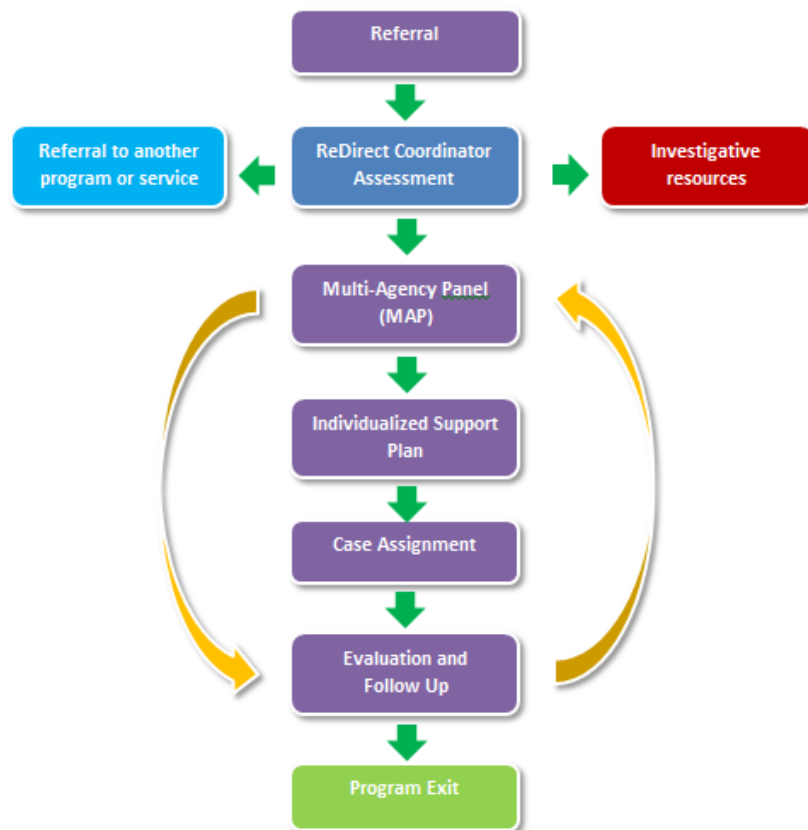


Figure 3: The ReDirect Process

The second component of the multi-agency panel is the community advisory committee, created to ensure that ReDirect was not just “a bunch of government partners working together in the usual way” (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016). The community advisory committee was created to provide strategic, macro-level guidance. The committee is made up of a wide range of representatives with the aim of representing a cross section of the entire Calgary demographic. The purpose of the committee is to serve as an advisory board and to “take a pulse” within the community on how is ReDirect being perceived. On a case-by-case basis, and with the client’s consent, ReDirect may also engage with a member of the committee on a particular client’s case.

The third component of the multi-agency panel is the strategic committee, which brings together the managers of the case planning team partner agencies, and provides strategic advice.



Figure 4: ReDirect's Multi-Agency Panel

Although Calgary Police Service is represented at the case planning team, its role is limited to presenting the background information that ReDirect has collected in its initial assessment. The case planning team partners are responsible for developing the individualized support plan for a client. Once the case planning committee drafts an individualized support plan, the case is assigned to ReDirect's two frontline staff. As with its sister programs under the Community and Youth Service Section, ReDirect pairs up a CPS police officer with a social workers from Calgary Community and Neighbourhood Services to implement the plan.

As the individualized support plan gets actioned, the ReDirect team reports back to the case planning team on the client's progress. This is the ReDirect process which continues until the case planning team, along with the ReDirect coordinator, have determined that the program has removed enough underlying vulnerabilities.

Once a client is exited from the program – not something that has occurred as of the time of this research project's fieldwork – the ReDirect coordinator will follow up with the client after six and twelve months. The purpose of the standardized follow ups is to reassess whether the client has succeeded following the ReDirect intervention, whether the underlying vulnerabilities have reappeared (and a re-entry into the program is appropriate), or whether a separate issue arose, which may warrant referral to a different community services program.

## **7. Broadening CVE Approaches and Securitization Concerns**

The following two chapters form the analysis portion of the thesis. The present chapter addresses some of the broader securitization concerns applicable to early intervention and prevention programs, as addressed in the first sub-research question: What are the securitization concerns with ReDirect and how does the program aim to address them? The following chapter will then focus more specifically on issues particular to the ReDirect program.

Both the concept of securitization, as defined by the Copenhagen School, and politicizing security, as proposed by the Welsh School are important tools for the discussion of a program in which a police force works in tandem with social services providers in a pre-criminal milieu. This chapter will lay out how the Copenhagen School provides a useful framework for the analysis of the concerns leveled against radicalization prevention programs such as ReDirect. The Welsh School approach will be used to complement the discussion, as it provides a suitable framework to discuss the recent broadening of Canada's approach to countering violent extremism (CVE).

Before commencing the discussion, let us delimit how the two theories are applied in this chapter. The discussion of the Copenhagen School in this chapter will focus on the cornerstone of Waever, Buzan and de Wilde's approach – securitization. It will forego discussion of security sectors and regional security complexes, since their relevance to a discussion on ReDirect would be limited. For its part, the Welsh School was primarily designed to serve as a counterpoint and critique of realist schools of security studies in the realm of world politics (Booth, 2005, p. 2). This chapter will apply the Welsh School framework at the domestic level, arguing that the concepts it raises apply equally well at the federal and municipal level. The discussion will be presented in two halves: the first half will analyze the broadening and re-framing of Canada's approach to countering violent extremism, while the second half will discuss the securitization concerns related to ReDirect.

### **7.1.Politicizing Security – Broadening CVE Approaches**

In the last 18 months, Canada has undergone a broadening of countering violent extremism (CVE) away from a strictly *national* security issue, in which federal security intelligence and law enforcement actors play the primary role. Instead, there has been a broadening of CVE approaches to include municipal level actors, social service providers and civil society organizations. Municipal level actors, including the Calgary Police Service, have launched programming to approach radicalization prevention and intervention at a community level. Reframing the concept of violent extremism from strictly a national security issue to also a municipal level, community policing issue represents a tacit acknowledgement that Canada “cannot [just] arrest [its] way out of this problem” (Federal Partner 3, personal communication, March 24, 2016). Such a reframing mirrors the Welsh

School's emancipatory project with its calls for freeing people from physical and human constraints which stop them carrying out what they would choose to do (Booth, 1991, p. 319).

As part of Canada's broadening approach, there has been a de-centralized sprouting up of grassroots, municipal-level radicalization prevention programs.<sup>7</sup> These programs were conceived at the municipal level, where local government recognized that its institutions had a role to play in countering violent extremism. At the time of their development, these programs' approaches ran counter to Canada's federal CVE strategy.<sup>8</sup> The exact means in which each municipality implemented this strategy differed based on local conditions. However, certain characteristics hold true for the range of municipal level programs. First, these programs operate in a strictly pre-criminal space. Second, they engage closely with a wide range of social service providers and civil society groups. The partner agencies come together to provide a wraparound approach which addresses the vulnerabilities of young people that may make them susceptible to radicalization.

The Welsh School offers a useful framework for analyzing the broadening of CVE approaches in Canada. A Welsh School approach implores de-centering the national (i.e. federal-level) state to instead focus on sub-state actors. This focus on sub-state (i.e. municipal) actors is important when discussing the sprouting up of community-level radicalization prevention programs. After all, these programs were created at the behest of municipal-level actors. Not only were these programs developed independently without coordination at the (federal) state level, their approach ran counter to the federal CVE strategy at the time (Federal Partner 3, personal communication, March 24, 2016). It was not until the Liberal Party's election in October 2015 that the federal government's re-orientation on the CVE file began to align with the approach taken by cities such as Calgary.

Similarly, the Welsh School focusses on the constitutive parts of a social phenomenon. In this case, that means peeling back the layers to analyze the internal politics which constituted the different municipalities' decision to frame CVE as a relevant issue for community programming. Put another way, the key to understanding why municipal-level CVE initiatives are beginning to sprout up around Canada is to analyze the trend rather than to treat it as exogenous. In Calgary, the local Muslim community defined violent extremism as a relevant security issue to be tackled at the community level. It therefore approached Calgary Police Service to develop ReDirect (Community Partner, personal communication, March 31, 2016). In Toronto, the Toronto Police Service partnered with local civil society groups in the Rexdale neighbourhood to create Focus Rexdale. These groups understood the value of CVE programming, but decided that the best way to tackle the issue was to

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<sup>7</sup> As well as the present case study ReDirect, other examples include Focus Rexdale and Montreal's Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence, as discussed in Appendix 1.

<sup>8</sup> Refer to section 8.1 for a more robust discussion of the federal CVE strategy that pre-dated ReDirect.

fold it into existing crime and gang prevention initiatives (Representative of Focus Rexdale, personal communication, April 22, 2016). In Montreal, the impetus for the creation of the Center for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence came from the Mayor's office. Given the local circumstances, the centre was created apart from local law enforcement (Former Strategic Analyst, personal communication, March 17, 2016).

## **7.2. Securitization Concerns**

The following section will apply the Copenhagen School concept of securitization to frame some of the critiques associated with a program like ReDirect. These will be broken down into three levels of analysis: organizational, community and individual. Let us recall that the Copenhagen School sees securitization as the discursive construction of threat. Securitization represents the process by which an actor declares a particular issue as an existential threat, thereby allowing for a suspension of ordinary measures in order to tackle it (Waeber, 1995, p. 55).

At the organizational level, securitization issues are centred on reconciling the administration of a pre-criminal intervention program within the same organization that is responsible for law enforcement. Skeptics of community policing approaches to CVE assert that the true purpose of such programming is illegal intelligence gathering. Creating a community policing framework allows law enforcement agencies to sidestep legal thresholds required to undertake national security investigations. Working closely with community and civil society organizations, a police-led early intervention program is thus able to become aware of individuals susceptible to radicalization at a far earlier stage than if it undertook a traditional investigation. The program is then able to pass on these actionable tips to the law enforcement wing of the police service.

Therefore, by 'securitizing' homegrown radicalization as an existential threat to the state, the police are able to sidestep its usual protocols around investigative thresholds. Viewed through this Copenhagen School lens, community policing accomplishes the opposite of its intended outcome: rather than preventing radicalization, the approach serves as a conveyor belt, bringing innocent individuals to the attention of law enforcement.

This securitization fear lies at the heart of criticism of United Kingdom's CVE strategy Prevent.<sup>9</sup> Prevent's critics charge that the strategy has created "the most elaborate systems of surveillance ever seen in Britain" (Kundnani, 2015, p. 15). Even though the government insists that it maintains an arm's length relationship between the police units that work on Prevent and those that engage in the harder, security intelligence and law enforcement, the distinction is lost on many of Prevent's

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<sup>9</sup> Refer to Appendix 1 for background on the United Kingdom's Prevent strategy.

community partners. The program's most recent review lamented that "one of the most damaging allegations made about Prevent [...] has been that it has strayed into the area of [intelligence and law enforcement] and become a means for spying on Muslim communities (HM Government, 2011, p. 5).

At the organizational level, Calgary Police has structured the program in such a way as to minimize the chances of this particular fear of securitization fear. Calgary Police Service is adamant that "although ReDirect is housed within the police, it's not an intelligence gathering program" (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016). All of the information Calgary Police gathers within the ReDirect program is stored in databases separate from the ones used within the rest of the police service. The Program Coordinator insists, "One of my colleagues elsewhere in the [Calgary Police] Service can't gain access to client information within ReDirect" (Personal communication, March 31, 2016).

ReDirect's client information is similarly not shared with CSIS, the federal intelligence service, and the RCMP, the national security police force. The Program Coordinator reports,

[ReDirect only works if] we develop that trust in the community which will give people the confidence to come forward. If we openly shared our client's information with law enforcement and intelligence, that trust would evaporate. And we're really protective of that relationship [with the community] (Personal communication, March 31, 2016).

The sole exception to the above structure is if ReDirect becomes aware of an imminent threat to public safety. "We make it clear [to community partners and clients] that we're still police officers. If someone is in imminent danger, we have an obligation to do something about it" (Frontline Staff Member 2, personal communication, March 30, 2016).

Frontline Staff Member 1 concedes that despite the program's efforts to be transparent and clearly delineate its work from Calgary Police's law enforcement efforts they realize they cannot win over everyone. "What always makes a huge difference is when people who know you in the community, such as community leaders, can vouch for you as well" (Frontline Staff Member 1, personal communication, March 30, 2016).

The Program Coordinator and Community Partner point out that ReDirect has so far faced securitization criticisms from voices mostly outside of Calgary. They perceive Calgary Police to have built a certain level of trust within the community, since this issue is not something on which the

program has been seriously challenged yet. The Program Coordinator notes the inverse relationship between securitization fears and community trust, which he sees as a “precious commodity”. He concedes that though ReDirect has taken steps in building community trust, “we realize that things that are completely out of our control could knock us back a couple of steps [and securitization concerns may arise]” (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016). As with many of the findings in this thesis, the fact that securitization issues have not yet arisen may be as much a function of the program’s design as of its short history.

At the community level, securitization fears may arise if an ethnic or religious community perceives that its quotidian social issues are framed within a national security context and therefore handled by law enforcement in an extraordinary way. This feeling can be exacerbated if there is a perception that a whole community is deemed ‘suspect’ and that it is painted with the broad brush of being ‘susceptible to terrorist involvement’ (HM Government, 2011, p. 7; Thomas, 2010, p. 447)

The unique circumstances within Calgary make ReDirect at least partially immune to these criticisms. First, radicalization intervention was not framed as a community policing issue by the CPS first and then imposed on the community. Instead, Calgary Police Service developed ReDirect at the request of the local Muslim community, which realized that it was facing a radicalization issue amongst its youth which it was not able to resolve alone (Community Partner, personal communication, March 31, 2016). Second, Copenhagen School securitization requires a problem to be framed as extraordinary (if not existential) and therefore requiring extraordinary solutions (Buzan et al., 1998). However, Calgary Police designed the ReDirect framework very much along the same lines as its other, longer-running community policing programs, such as those aimed at elementary children with social issues or teens susceptible to gangs. Therefore in the Calgary context, ReDirect represents a rather ‘ordinary’ response to radicalization to violent extremism.

At the individual level, fears of securitization revolve around being labeled as a ‘potential terrorist’ and the associated stigmatization of being a ReDirect client. It is important to remain cognisant of the fact that ReDirect works in a strictly pre-criminal space. Its clients are – by definition – young people who *have not* committed a crime related to violent extremism. And if the program works as designed, these people will go on to live productive lives and *will never* become criminals or the subjects of a national security investigation. These questions of securitization are amplified by the fact that ReDirect works with youth, some of which are below the age of 18.

Calgary Police aimed to counter these securitization fears by designing a program that is 100% voluntary, so a client can opt out at any point. If a client feels like taking part in ReDirect may hold



adverse consequences, they are free to disassociate themselves from it (Frontline Staff Member 1, personal communication, March 30, 2016). If that were to happen, their personal information would remain with ReDirect, though protected from law enforcement and intelligence agencies. Furthermore, the program requires consent from the client and her parents for any ReDirect participant under the age of 18.

The Program Coordinator reported that client confidentiality lies at the heart of ReDirect's efforts to prevent client stigmatization. The program used an external law firm to develop a code of ethics and confidentiality agreements with members of the community advisory committee. Community trust is at the heart of ReDirect's success and it is predicated on the program's ability to ensure that "any information that comes in does not get out" (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

As the same time, the success of a community hub model such as ReDirect is dependent on representatives at the roundtable being able to share information and leverage their respective expertise to develop the most appropriate intervention plan. To that end, the program has signed a series of memoranda of understanding and information sharing agreements with each agency and civil society group present at the case planning and strategic committees. These agreements allow ReDirect partners such as Alberta Health Services or the Calgary Board of Education to share deeply personal data on a client comfortably, knowing that the other roundtable participants will not be able to pass it on to third parties (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

The Program Coordinator admits that despite these efforts, ReDirect's sister community policing programs (such as the Youth at Risk Development Program (YARD)) have experienced some level of 'leakage'. Thus far, this 'leakage' has been mostly positive (regarding stories of clients' successes) and has helped Calgary Police garner further community trust.

[Previous programs have shown that] as we start to have some success stories, there is always a little bit of leakage. As much as we like to say that we don't want it to get into the community that a specific person was part of the program, the community - through the community advisory committee - will start to realize that this program works, starts speaking positively about ReDirect" (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

This leakage is somewhat troubling, despite the fact that client identities have only thus far leaked in cases with a positive outcome. After all, there is no inherent reason for 'leakage' to only occur for

successful cases. Community partners may similarly leak the identities of other clients, which could result in stigmatization of being deemed a 'potential terrorist'.

As a concluding caveat on the discussion regarding securitization concerns, it is worth restating that this research project examined ReDirect a mere six months after the program launched. While the informants were able to point to examples of overcoming securitization fears in Calgary's other community policing programs, ReDirect itself has not yet had to respond to widespread criticisms of securitization.<sup>10</sup> Second, this research project did not consult a wide range of community members given the exogenous limits on data collection and the breadth of informants this project aimed to interview. Third, as discussed in Chapter 2, I relied on Sgt. Paul Dunn to serve as an intermediary in reaching out to ReDirect community partners. This may have introduced a bias in informant selection, as well as informants' testimonies. Community partners who view the program positively may have been inherently more likely to agree to participate in this study.

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<sup>10</sup> This point is discussed in more detail in the under Limitations and Challenges in chapter 8.

## 8. ReDirect's Distinctive Role, Perceived Strengths, Limitations and Transferability

### 8.1. The Distinctive Role of ReDirect

Having outlined the ReDirect process, let us begin the discussion of this thesis' findings by addressing the main research question head on: What is the distinct role of *municipal* policing programs such as ReDirect in tackling the *national* security issue of radicalization to violent extremism? The answer will be addressed in two sections, applying the Welsh School approach of analyzing the constitutive parts of a social phenomenon. Section one will examine ReDirect's unique position at an organizational level, discussing the program's position within the landscape of Canadian national security agencies involved in countering violent extremism and counter-terrorism. Section two will discuss how ReDirect staff perceives the program's unique role on a functional level.

From an organizational standpoint, this thesis found an "intervention gap" on the radicalization continuum in Canada and contends that programs such as ReDirect provide one way to fill this critical gap. The program's unique characteristics provide it with a legal mandate, political will, community buy-in and perceived competency to undertake a radicalization prevention agenda. Before unpacking that finding, we must first discuss the proposed "intervention gap" in the Canadian counter-terrorism and radicalization landscape.

Until the recent shift towards municipal-level programs, countering violent extremism has been perceived in Canada as a *national* security issue and handled at a federal level. At this federal level, the main actors have been the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Public Safety Canada. However, the legal mandates and political priorities of these bodies have resulted in an "intervention gap".

As chapter 4 explained, CSIS, Canada's security intelligence service, works at a relatively low threshold of "reasonable grounds to suspect" that a person represents a threat to the national security of Canada. As a result of this low threshold, the Service comes across individuals in the very early phases of radicalization, including some who may be viable candidates for early intervention or prevention efforts. However, Canada's courts and the Security Intelligence Review Committee (SIRC) – the CSIS watchdog – have repeatedly criticized the Service for actions seemingly beyond a strict definition of its mandate – to advise government.

In its 2009/2010 annual review, SIRC noted that CSIS may, in the course of national security investigations, intervene or disrupt a target's actions by making it generally known that their activities are being investigated, thus reducing the likelihood that the targets will continue with their

plans. SIRC admitted that it is also possible that a threat may be disrupted unintentionally, if “an activity undertaken by the Service could dissuade an individual from pursuing future threat-related behaviour even though that result was not intended” (Security Intelligence Review Committee, 2010). Regardless, the Committee found that any actions which can be perceived as intervention or disruption are not authorized by CSIS’ mandate. As a result of these strict limits, CSIS Director Michel Couombe decried that, “[Although] CSIS’s mandate [...] allows it to have early awareness of developing threats, [...]CSIS has no legislative authority to act on this information, even when doing so could save lives and defuse or remove that threat” (*Hearing on Bill C-51*, 2015).

The RCMP is Canada’s national police force and the body responsible for taking the lead on criminal counter-terrorism investigations. When CSIS has “reasonable ground to believe” that a criminal act under s. 83 of the Criminal Code may have been committed, it may advise the RCMP, who start a “separate but parallel” criminal investigation (Gibson, 2013). However, by the time an intelligence investigation morphs into a criminal investigation, the subject is well en route the radicalization continuum and hardly an appropriate candidate for an early prevention program.

On paper, the RCMP’s mandate also extends to national security threat prevention programming. At the time of research, the RCMP followed two strands of preventative programming.<sup>11</sup> The RCMP engages in proactive outreach within communities that have since 9/11 been “disproportionately affected by national security investigations” (Federal Partner 2, personal communication, April 4, 2016). The objective of this programming is to build a foundation of trust between police and community leaders and organizations, so that when the police approach the community during a national security investigation, the two parties have a baseline level of trust in one another. The second strand has been a focus on “high risk individuals, lone actors, or high risk travellers to conflict zones” who nevertheless pose “no imminent threat to Canada’s national security” (Federal Partner 2, personal communication, April 4, 2016). The RCMP works with these high risk individuals to try to de-radicalize or disengage them from a path towards violent extremism.

The RCMP’s understanding of radicalization prevention programming differs greatly from that of the Calgary Police Service. First, community bridge-building, while worthwhile in its own right, is not a tool for early intervention. Second, the RCMP’s “high risk traveller” program is not a broad-based early intervention program, but rather a narrowly deployed initiative. It is aimed at a very select group of young people who are identified as being at the cusp of violent extremism or travelling abroad to join a terror group. Rather than talk of “early intervention”, Federal Partner 2 admits that

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<sup>11</sup> Appendix 1 provides an overview of a more robust, national CVE program that the RCMP is currently putting together and looking to launch in the near future.

in some instances, “disengagement” and “de-radicalization” are more apt descriptors for the RCMP’s actions (Federal Partner 2, personal communication, April 4, 2016).

The RCMP’s lack of focus on early intervention and radicalization was further underlined by an informant unwilling to speak on the record but with several years of first-hand experience of the subject. The informant expressed doubts about the RCMP’s commitment (at least at the regional level) to national security preventative work. According to the informant, the RCMP’s expertise lies in pursuing criminal counter-terrorism investigations, and as a result it places a greater emphasis on this section of its mandate.

A similar disconnect between official strategic priorities, political will and resource allocation was echoed by Federal Partner 3 in regards to the work of Public Safety Canada. As has been previously noted, Canada launched its national counter-terrorism strategy, *Building Resilience Against Terrorism*, in 2010. The strategy laid out four strands to Canada’s approach: Prevent, Detect, Deny and Respond. However, Federal Partner 3 admitted that of the four strands, Prevent received the least priority under Canada’s former Conservative government. “The focus [under the previous government] has been more on the Detect, Deny and Respond strands of the CT (counter-terrorism) strategy. [Furthermore], most countering efforts have been focussed on [a small group of] ‘high risk offenders’ deemed most susceptible to radicalization” (Federal Partner 3, personal communication, March 24, 2016).

It is only following the federal election in October 2015 that the new Liberal government is revisiting the federal government’s commitment to preventative programming. In his Mandate Letter, Canada’s Minister of Public Safety Ralph Goodale was instructed to create an Office of the Community Outreach and Counter-radicalization Coordinator, referred to colloquially as the Office of the National CVE Coordinator (Office of the Prime Minister of Canada, 2015).<sup>12</sup>

In sum, this federal landscape results in an “intervention gap” on the radicalization path. While CSIS may identify individuals early enough in the radicalization process to make them suitable candidates for early intervention, their mandate prevents them from undertaking any action beyond advising government. On the other hand, RCMP’s mandate includes national security threat prevention, but the preventative work that the RCMP has undertaken has been strictly focussed on “high risk travellers”. These are individuals on the cusp of violent extremism, who make more suitable candidates for disengagement and de-radicalization efforts rather than early intervention and

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<sup>12</sup> Mandate letters is a formal document from the Prime Minister to each member of their Cabinet, outlining the government’s priorities for the upcoming session. For the first time, Prime Minister Trudeau published these letters publicly.

prevention. Moreover, the RCMP has been largely focussed on the criminal investigation part of its mandate. This means that by the time an individual would come to the RCMP's attention from CSIS, it would be far too late to undertake preventative measures. This "intervention gap" has been compounded by Public Safety Canada's lack of emphasis on the implementation of preventative programming.

The "intervention gap" can be most clearly observed in the story of Christianne Boudreau, the mother of Damian Claremont, a young man from Calgary who left Canada in November 2012 to travel to Syria to fight with ISIS and was eventually killed in January 2014 (Bell, 2014a). Several weeks after her son left Canada, Boudreau was visited by CSIS officers. They informed her that they have been investigating her son for some time and that he had not travelled to Egypt for religious education, as he had told her. Rather, Damian was in Turkey and en route to the Syrian battlefield. Boudreau was livid that the Service had not done anything to prevent her son from travelling (Parent 1, personal communication, April 22, 2016).<sup>13</sup>

When interpreted through the lens of the "intervention gap", Boudreau's story does not appear so confounding. Before he left Canada, Damian had not committed a criminal offence.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the case was strictly under the purview of CSIS, an agency explicitly instructed not to intervene in these cases. The RCMP, meanwhile, it appears did not yet have a robust enough criminal case to pursue prosecution under Canada's anti-terror laws.

Canada is hardly alone in facing this type of conundrum. In 2013, Ranstorp and Hyllegren warned of a similar 'bureaucratic gap' in Sweden between the central government and the municipal level. They argued that the Swedish Security Service (SAPO), which should normally be the last resort in handling cases of radicalization, was in fact the first resort and the only response in cases of concern since there were no other bodies to contact (Ranstorp & Hyllegren, 2013, p. 3). Similarly, they called for the development of other non-judicial 'air bags', which could be used primarily at the municipal level and in cooperation with civil society as to prevent radicalization at the very earliest stages. The Swedish government adopted several of the report's recommendations of addressing this 'bureaucratic gap', including the creation of a national CVE coordinator (Government Offices of Sweden, 2015).

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<sup>13</sup> The former Conservative government aimed to remedy some of these shortcomings by enacting Bill C-51 in June 2015. The bill provides CSIS with limited powers of disruption on a case-by-case basis. In a parliamentary committee hearing on March 7, 2016, CSIS Director Michel Coulombe testified that the Service has used these powers "nearly two dozen times". The service did not seek judicial approval in any of the cases, meaning the spy agency did not deem its actions to be in breach of anyone's charter rights.

<sup>14</sup> This has also changed since. In 2013, Bill C-9 added s. 83.181 to the Criminal Code, making it a crime to leave Canada to participate in the activity of a terror group.

Viewed through this prism, ReDirect represents one means of addressing this “intervention gap”. By fostering relationships with civil society and government partner organizations to refer potential clients, ReDirect is set up to become aware of individuals very early in the radicalization process, just as CSIS would be. By being a police force, like the RCMP, Calgary Police Service has the legal mandate to undertake early intervention and preventative actions in a pre-criminal space. And lastly, by working at a municipal level, ReDirect is not subject to the strategic priorities defined by the federal government. As such, CPS was able to begin developing its ReDirect program even under the former Conservative government, which did not pursue the Prevent strand of Canada’s counter-terrorism strategy with equal vigour.

This “intervention gap” hypothesis presented here is not immune to criticism. Federal Partner 4 pushed back on the overarching assertion that there was an “intervention gap”, with no agency willing and able to provide early intervention in the radicalization process. Federal Partner 4 warned that this too narrow a focus on federal actors and the issue of radicalization misses the plethora of human services providers working at the sub-national level.

There have always been a number of resources at play - whether it’s guidance counsellors in schools or religious leaders or parents or health care workers - that have an effect on individuals as they make choices in their lives as to what pathways they want to take and how they want to live their lives.

Many of those ‘off ramps’ to avoid [becoming a terrorist] have always been there. It’s just that those people on those ‘off ramps’ didn’t necessarily intentionally or deliberately have as an objective the prevention of *that* particular manifestation of inappropriate, illegal and harmful behaviour.

If you ask a social worker, ‘Is your job to prevent murder? Is your job to prevent theft? What is your job?’ They’d define their job as helping young people develop healthy lives and to make informed choices and empower them, which will simultaneously contribute to the communities in which they live. They won’t necessarily go out there with a specific purpose to prevent a specific type of anti-social behaviour (Federal Partner 4, personal communication, May 2, 2016).

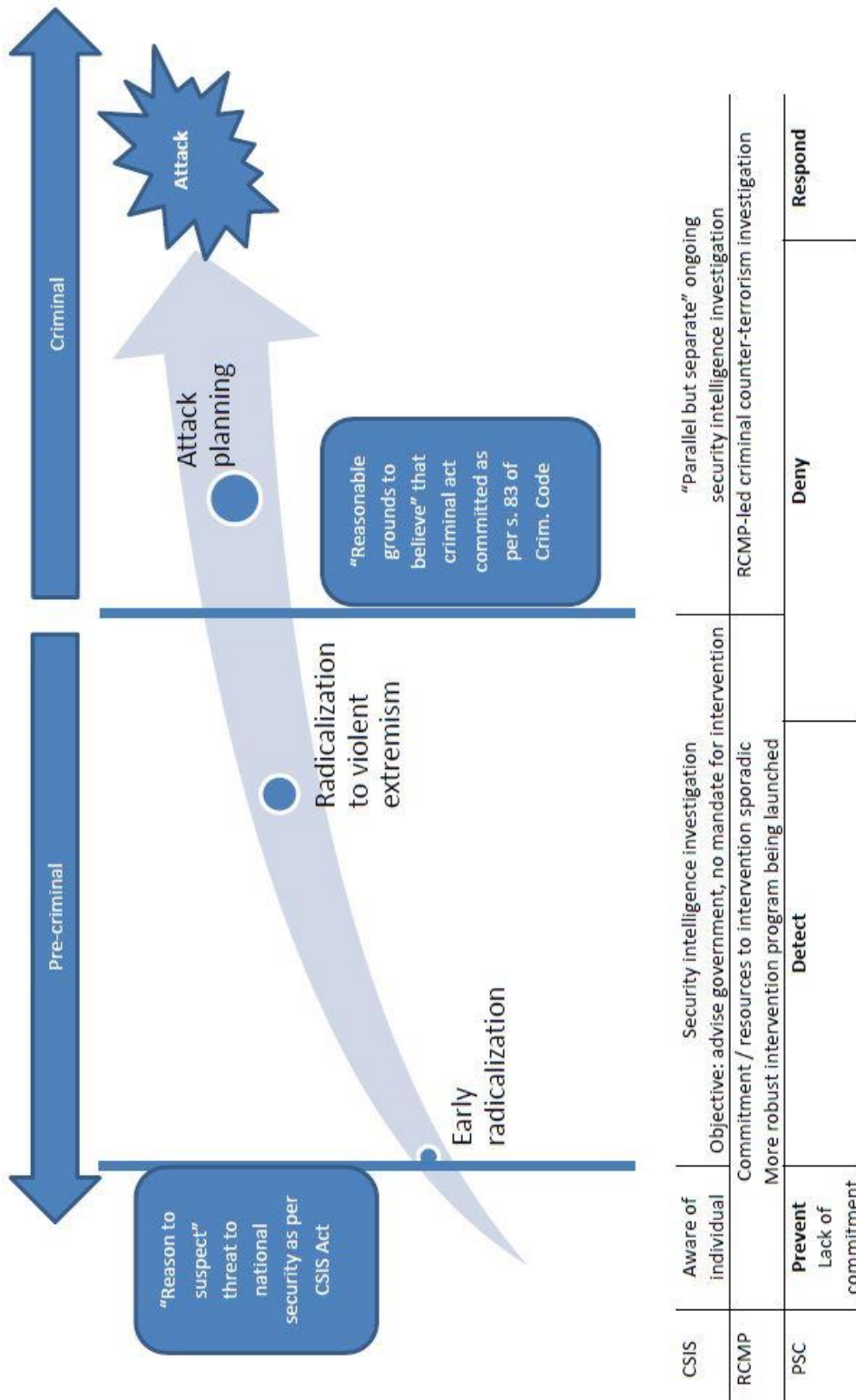


Figure 5: Canada's "intervention gap"

Functionally, the ReDirect program plays a distinct role in several ways. First and foremost, Calgary Police Service's development of a designated, community policing program at the municipal level for



early intervention and radicalization prevention represented a first in Canada. Utilizing a community policing approach to tackle CVE is novel in the Canadian context, because as the arc of this thesis describes, radicalization to violent extremism has traditionally been framed as a national security issue and dealt with primarily at the federal level by CSIS, the RCMP and PSC.

Second, ReDirect's function is distinct in its singular focus on working with young individuals who are either identified as susceptible but not yet radicalizing, or individuals in the early stages of radicalization. Of note, ReDirect explicitly does not engage trying to de-radicalize domestic extremists or returning foreign fighters.

Third, this research project has revealed that within the City of Calgary, Calgary Police Service (CPS) plays a role far wider than enforcing the law or administering programming related to crime prevention. The police service plays a central role in the municipality as a convenor of community groups, civil society organizations and government partners. It is notable that Calgary Police runs a number of community programs with no direct law enforcement or crime prevention nexus. For example, CPS runs the Start Smart Stay Safe program, in which police officers visit elementary schools and discuss the importance of using problem solving skills, making healthy choices and using respectful communication skills. Similarly, the police run the Calgary Police Cadet Corps, modeled after the Canadian Military Cadet Programs for youths aged 12 – 17. The CPS's role is further cemented by the fact that its headquarters building is used for organizing community programs in which the police is but one member. This perception of Calgary Police as more than a law enforcement agency has meant that developing ReDirect, a program which some may not perceive as falling within the strict parameters of a municipal police force's jurisdiction, was a relatively natural fit.

Considering the above finding through the lens of the Welsh School reveals noteworthy parallels. Let us recall that the Welsh School sees security as a derivative concept, calls for breaking down the delineation between subjects and objects and emphasizes emancipation as security. One of the objectives of the Welsh School is to widen the spectre of what constitutes security by focussing on emancipation - freeing people from the physical and human constraints.

These theoretical concepts find clear resonance in the Calgary Police Service approach to community policing. A community policing approach views the police and the community as equal partners in tackling social disorder and crime (Reisig, 2010, pp. 1-2). The community writ large plays a central role in defining local problems and setting their priority. This cooperative approach is reflected in the Welsh School, which rejects a clear demarcation between the subject of security (the police) and the

object (the community). Rather, the two are seen as constitutive parts which together define security.

Similarly, chapter 5 described how Calgary Police Executive takes a broader view of criminality and disorder, one which goes beyond employing strictly punitive measures after a crime has been committed. Instead, the Executive frames deviant individuals not as simply criminals, but as ‘high end users’ across a wide range of government agencies (Police Executive, personal communication, March 31, 2016). With such a wider, system-level approach, it follows that the solution lies in working with municipal and provincial partners to try to decrease or eliminate the underlying factors that lead to deviance and criminality. The Calgary Police’s viewpoint mirrors the Welsh School’s call for a broadening of the concept of security to include emancipation. In turn, the emancipatory outlook toward security employed by Calgary Police is reflected in its broad role in the community as a convenor of community groups, civil society organizations and government partners.

## **8.2. Understanding Radicalization**

The following section will discuss the first sub-research question: How does the Calgary Police Service (CPS) understand the process of radicalization and how does this understanding inform its approach? During the period of the program’s conception, Calgary Police undertook a literature review of the current discourse on radicalization. According to the Program Coordinator, there was an acknowledgement within Calgary Police that while its existing crime prevention framework may have held certain transferable lessons for ReDirect, radicalization to ideological violence is a distinct enough phenomenon that the police service needed to build competency in this area specifically before launching the program. Calgary Police applied these different approaches to existing case studies of foreign fighters that have left the city and found certain theories to be particularly instructive (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

The first of these is Max Taylor and John Horgan’s conception of terrorism not as a psychological state of being, but rather as a process (Taylor & Horgan, 2006). Let us recall that this approach is critical of previous attempts to identify unique or personal qualities of terrorists as somehow being disconnected from context and history. The Former Strategic Analyst further point out even if such a profile or characteristic were ever found, operationalizing this knowledge would present a wide range of challenges.

How would you test for this [one, reliable characteristic or profile] in a meaningful fashion?

People who are radicalized are not going to sit down for a psychological test; they won’t subject themselves to experiments. Or do we subject all kids in kindergarten and grade 1 to

a battery of tests to determine if in ten years' time they will become X, Y or Z (Former Strategic Analyst, personal communication, March 17, 2016)?

Taylor and Horgan's approach has instructed ReDirect to stay away from checklists in determining whether an individual would make an appropriate client for the program.

We don't try to come up with a magic formula that helps [us] identify these people. You can sit there and check all the boxes and never commit violence. Conversely, you can check none of the boxes and become the person that goes on to commit the violence. In real estate they talk about location, location, location. Well, in ReDirect we've now termed that into context, context, context (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

Despite this lack of a 'terrorist profile', let us remember that Horgan does offer several 'predisposing risk factors' that may predict possible radicalization and involvement in a terror group (Horgan, 2008, pp. 84-85). Several of these have played a role in defining how Calgary Police approaches the ReDirect program. According to Horgan, the primary risk factor is 'emotional vulnerability' in terms of anger, alienation or disenfranchisement, synonymous with feelings of being culturally uprooted or displaced and a longing for a sense of community. This is borne out by the experiences of Frontline Staff Member 1, who points out that many ReDirect clients are struggling to reconcile subtle shades of gray of various religious, ethnic and national identities overlapping and sometimes clashing. Therefore, they are attracted to a de-pluralized, black and white religious message (Frontline Staff Member 1, personal communication, March 30, 2016).

Horgan also highlights that individuals adopt a global victimization narrative which frames the Muslim *ummah* as under attack by the West in general. The Program Coordinator attests that this narrative has resonated with ReDirect clients who, "feel under threat. They perceive there to be a war on Islam, with the West being at war with Islam. It's the idea that 'We're being threatened here: our culture, our people are being threatened'" (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

Perhaps the most instructive aspect of Horgan's approach is its emphasis that a comprehensive view of radicalization does not limit its analysis to an examination of the 'push' factors (external forces that provide the push into terrorism), but also 'pull' factors (the internal, supportive qualities of a terror group that lures individuals into joining it). One of the objectives of ReDirect is to displace the conditions in which the pull factors of violent extremism resonate best with an individual.

Second, Quintan Wiktorowicz's application of Framing Theory has been influential in the development of ReDirect. Let us recall that Wiktorowicz breaks down the process of joining a radical Islamic group into four discrete steps: cognitive opening, religious seeking, frame alignment and socialization. According to Wiktorowicz, a crisis can produce a cognitive opening that results in individuals being open to movements they would have otherwise rejected as "extreme," "militant," or "irrational." The cognitive opening shakes an individual's certainty in previously accepted beliefs and renders an individual more receptive to the possibility of alternative views and perspectives (Wiktorowicz, 2004, p. 8).

This first step of cognitive opening is the most applicable to the ReDirect program, since its parameters are to engage individuals either before they radicalize or at the very early stages of radicalization. By understanding pre-radicalization in these terms, the wraparound approach offered by ReDirect is able to boost the exogenous factors as to minimize the depth and breadth of an individual's cognitive opening to violent extremism.

In regards to economic and social crises, ReDirect brings together a wide range of social service providers – whether housing cooperatives or employment agencies - whose role is to connect ReDirect clients with existing programs that address these issues. When it comes to cognitive sophistication, ReDirect engages with Calgary's two school boards to find ways for the individual to best succeed in a formalized learning environment. ReDirect's direct engagement with families aims to maximize the countervailing pressure coming from home. By participating in CPS' youth community policing programs, an individual is exposed to an alternate social network. Lastly, ReDirect works closely with local religious leaders who offer alternative resonant ideologies and work to reframe the individual's personal grievances (Community Partner, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

Wiktorowicz's theory also offers a role for programs such as ReDirect by showing that grievances and discontent do not automatically lead to action. Instead, radicalization is a social process that results from interaction with and within a radical group. The process requires an individual to be gradually convinced that their perceived grievances require a violent solution, and that this violence is religiously sanctioned (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010, p. 803). This explanation allows room for early intervention programs like ReDirect, if they are able to address these grievances and discontents before they manifest into the joining of a violent extremist group.

Despite the program's focus on addressing personal crises and resulting cognitive openings, the Program Coordinator stresses that not all ReDirect clients may enter the program for such dire

personal reasons. He notes that, “There’s elements of those that are just seeking adventure [and are flirting with ideological violence]. Others approach violent extremism with an opportunistic outlook, looking to self-gain, power, control, or even money” (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016). He also notes that a certain percentage of individuals fall under the rising crime / terrorism nexus. They are individuals who may be familiar to Calgary Police from the law enforcement side for having previously led a life of crime. This is a phenomenon that has been documented at the international scale. For example, Basra, Neumann & Brunner (2016) assert that there has been an increase in the number of these individuals that turn to ISIS-inspired extremist ideology for spiritual guidance and for a means of atoning for past criminal sins.

According to one of the religious leaders partnering with ReDirect, religious exclusivity represents one of the key variables which indicate whether an individual is at the early stages of radicalization.

With [religious exclusivity] comes a very singular attitude: there is only one correct path and all others lead to the hellfire. These individuals restrict their understanding of Islam to a very small group of scholars. So, for them, it’s only these two scholars they believe to be true and everyone else is incorrect. It represents a real black and white approach to their religion (Community Partner, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

### **8.2.1. Focus on Behavioural Radicalization**

One of the features of ReDirect is the program’s strict focus on so-called behavioural radicalization as opposed to cognitive radicalization. This means that the program focusses on preventing actions that lead to violent extremism, as opposed to attempting to sway their clients away from ‘radical thought’.

The ReDirect Program Coordinator is adamant,

To be a radical is OK. The definition is that radicals seek to bring about change democratic and social change down to the minute details. [Our role is to prevent] the process of radicalization, where that person or that group start to believe that the only way to bring about that change is by using violence to make it happen (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

This distinction between radical thought and violent actions was shared by all government informants, whether federal partners or the Representative of Focus Rexdale. Federal Partner 3 echoed ReDirect's sentiment,

We're concerned with radicalization to *violence*, not radical thoughts in and of themselves. Having radical thoughts is not a criminal offence. We have to remember, radical thought has brought about much positive change, whether the civil rights movements, the suffragettes movement, etc. But when people decide to engage in *violence*, that act is criminal. We've been very specific on this (Federal Partner 3, personal communication, March 24, 2016).

This approach has been adopted within Canada for two reasons. First, several of the informants acknowledged that a government program, even in cooperation with religious and civil society organizations, has no role to play as a religious arbiter. After all, the line between 'mainstream' and 'radical' religious thought is intersubjective, and seen as wholly outside the preview of the government's role. Second, the Program Coordinator and Federal Partner 3 specifically provided this approach as one of the lessons learned from the United Kingdom's Prevent program.

Critics of the Prevent program argue that it has taken on not only a 'means-based' strategy to prevent radicalization, but also a far more expansive 'values-based' approach (Birt, 2009). The former sees Islamist terrorism in the UK as largely a socio-political phenomenon and it focusses on the personal and political factors that attract some young Muslim men to radicalisation. As such, this approach engages with groups and individuals who can work constructively with such young men, even if such organizations are conservative and deeply critical of British society. The latter, 'values-based' approach comes from the Prevent strategy's stated goal of "challenging extremist (and non-violent) ideas" (HM Government, 2011, p. 6). Critics warn that this approach has dominated the British government's view of CVE and has given the impression that the government is overtly intervening to shape religious practice. This 'values-based' understanding sees a problem with the way Islam itself is understood and leads to a need to promote and develop a more moderate and progressive 'British Islam' (Birt, 2009, p. 54).

This criticism resonates strongly with individuals responsible for coordinating Canada's fledgling CVE programs and creating the national office of the CVE coordinator. Explicitly setting apart this Canadian approach from the Prevent strategy, Federal Partner 3 noted, "We're trying to be mindful that people have the right to think the way they think and that it's their actions that count (Federal Partner 3, personal communication, March 24, 2016).

### **8.2.2. A Warning Note**

The division between cognitive radicalization and behavioural radicalization, in concert with Canada's focus on the latter, is presented as key to understanding's Canada's approach to CVE. However, one ought to be careful to overstate this particular point and to assume a firm division between the two. This is a lesson Canada learned the hard way recently in the attempted terror attack by Aaron Driver.<sup>15</sup>

In June 2015, Aaron Driver was first arrested for publishing messages that praised terrorist activities. Following a brief detention, Driver was released on a 'peace bond' last summer, which imposed limits on Driver's activities; he was ordered to comply with 18 different conditions, including wearing a GPS tracking device (Canadian Press, 2016).

Dr. Amarnath Amarasingam, a Fellow at The George Washington University Program on Extremism, served as an expert witness at Driver's peace bond hearing and was brought in to assess Driver's threat level. Given Driver's alienation from his family, Amarasingam is thought to have had the most intimate insight into Driver's mindset. Amarasingam noted that Driver "was definitely radicalized and not shy about his support for the Islamic State". However, he also found that "[Driver] had nuanced understanding regarding the legitimate use of violence under Islamic law. He definitely had radical ideas, [...] but was he one of those guys that could launch an attack? At that time, he did not strike us as someone susceptible to that" (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2016a). The fact that the RCMP did not pursue a fully-fledged investigation beyond a peace bond suggests that they shared Amarasingam's interpretation of Driver as merely a 'cognitive radical'.

However, between April and August 2016, Driver changed from one category to the other. Perhaps this transformation was driven by the call from Abu Mohammad al-Adnani for increased attacks in the West during Ramadan. Alternatively, he may have been encouraged by the widespread coverage of recent ISIS-inspired attacks in Europe and the Middle East (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2016a). Regardless, the incident once again underlined that there is no clear delineation between the 'talkers' and the 'doers'. Hence, Canada's focus on strictly behavioural radicalization rather than cognitive radicalization in its CVE efforts may not inoculate it against these threats.

### **8.3. Perceived Strengths**

The following two sections discuss the third sub-research question examined by this thesis: What are the perceived strengths and limitations of a municipal-level CVE program like ReDirect? As the

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<sup>15</sup> On August 10, 2016, Aaron Driver, an open ISIS supporter, was killed outside a home in Strathroy, ON during a confrontation with police. Officers opened fire after Driver detonated one improvised explosive device in the backseat of a taxi and threatened to detonate another en route to downtown London, ON.

methods section highlighted, this thesis applies a qualitative method and a constructivist theory approach to its examination of ReDirect. This research approach is coupled with the fact that ReDirect is a relatively new program with no clients that have ‘graduated’. As a result, the following section is not able to provide any empirical conclusions about what works within ReDirect. Rather, it will provide an appraisal of the strengths of the program, as perceived by the study’ informants.

The first and foremost perceived strength of ReDirect is that the program is a “made *in* Calgary, made *for* Calgary” approach to community-level radicalization prevention. This context-specific program design has resulted in several defining features which sets it apart from other similar initiatives being undertaken in Canada and internationally. First, as previous sections have noted, the Calgary Police Service administers a comprehensive range of community policing programs. As such, ReDirect represents but a small ‘Lego block’ being tacked on to an existing framework. The Program Coordinator explains,

What we have in Calgary, is an extensive community youth services section, where we have over forty years working in partnerships in our community. So, really ReDirect is not a standalone program. We have all these other building blocks, and all we’ve done is that we’ve come along with ReDirect and we’ve attached this Lego block to it (Personal communication, March 31, 2016).

This history of engagement with community groups allows the CPS to leverage existing relationships in order to build a new program such as ReDirect. According to the Program Coordinator, this ability for ReDirect to ‘plug into’ an existing community policing framework allowed the program to be created relatively rapidly without having to “reinvent the wheel”. Similarly, the wraparound (or community hub) approach favoured by programs such as the Channel Program, the Aarhus Model, Hayat Germany and Focus Rexdale had been successfully employed in CPS’ longer-running community policing programs, and therefore was embraced as the right fit for ReDirect (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

Second, Calgary Police Services enjoys particularly high levels of trust and credibility within the community it serves. A 2013 citizens’ survey showed that 97% of Calgarians approved of the job that the CPS performed (Calgary Police Commission, 2013).<sup>16</sup> Though a more recent survey conducted by a different firm using different methodology indicates that this figure may have decreased somewhat since then (Mainstreet Research Canada, 2016), every informant interviewed during

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<sup>16</sup> The survey did not break down the results by religious affiliation or ethnic background.



fieldwork in Calgary cited the former statistic to indicate the levels of social capital that Calgary Police Service carries. Among civil society and government partners alike, Calgary Police is seen as an institution that “gets” community policing and the ethos of “supporting the community and not about causing more harm to the community” (Frontline Staff A, personal communication, March 30, 2016). According to a representative from a community group involved with ReDirect, the CPS is perceived in the community as doing a “phenomenal job”. This opens the door to cooperating with community organizations, who know that “partnering yourself with someone that is trustworthy naturally brings your organization credibility and trust” (Community Partner, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

This level of trust and credibility within the community is perhaps best demonstrated in the origin story of ReDirect. In contrast to most other programs of its kind, ReDirect was not initially conceived by Calgary Police. Rather, when Calgary’s Muslim community realized that it was facing a radicalization problem among its youth, *it* approached the police to request that they take the lead on developing a community-level radicalization prevention program (Community Partner, personal communication, March 31, 2016; Frontline Staff A, personal communication, March 30, 2016). Calgary Police was seen as a natural fit to develop a radicalization prevention program, given CPS’ positive track record of running similar community policing programs, as well as its wider role as a convener of local social service providers.<sup>17</sup>

Third, although Calgary Police Service takes the lead on implementing the intervention plans, strategic and tactical-level decisions about ReDirect and its clients are made by community partner organizations and fellow government agencies. This community engagement has been at the heart of ReDirect from conception and through the program’s launch. As a first step, following the community’s request to create a program like ReDirect, CPS undertook early, strategic-level consultations with religious leaders and community groups. The Program Coordinator explains,

We recognized that we couldn’t just go to the community with a finished product. Right from the very beginning, we engaged community partners across the board: we went to local school boards, we met with leaders in the Calgary Jewish and Muslim communities among others. [And the overriding question was]: how do you want to be involved? How do you perceive yourself being involved? (Personal communication, March 31, 2016)

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<sup>17</sup> Refer to section ‘Program Transferability – Across Municipalities’ for further background.

As the program developed, this group would reconvene periodically to review the shape that ReDirect was taking and to provide critical feedback. Even once the program structure was set in place, the Program Coordinator met with key community partners one more time to gather feedback. “The community groups’ feedback was very useful, showing us that we were on the right track, it worked for them, and they could see it working. More importantly, we didn’t surprise them by one week later officially launching the program” (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

Admittedly, this research project has limited means of triangulating the above perceptions, since it interviewed only one ReDirect community partner. However, this individual’s interpretation of the program’s focus on community participation corroborated the Program Coordinator’s assessment. Namely, the Community Partner named three ‘keys to success’ which he presented to Calgary Police in those early consultation sessions which were folded into the program. The Community Partner, a local religious leader, insisted that ReDirect be preventative in nature, “In my experience, trying to de-radicalize someone who’s already radicalized is one of the most difficult challenges you could come across” (Personal communication, March 31, 2016). Second, the Community Partner insisted that ReDirect employ a wraparound approach, one which takes into account the plethora of reasons why an individual may be susceptible to radicalization. Lastly, he expressed that “the community needs to be a part of the solution, and not just someone on the outside looking in” (Personal communication, March 31, 2016).

The fourth perceived strength of ReDirect is the professional and personal backgrounds of the program’s frontline staff. As with CPS’ other community policing programs, ReDirect employs a multi-disciplinary approach: the frontline team brings together one social worker, seconded from Calgary Community and Neighbourhood Services (Frontline Staff Member 1), and a CPS police officer (Frontline Staff Member 2).

This partnership between the police officer and social worker allows the two frontline staff to bring complementary skills, resources and approaches to address each case. Frontlines Staff Member A explains,

We come from very different perspectives on dealing with kids. And this difference is an asset to the program. [Frontline Staff Member 2] sees things from a law enforcement side, and I see things from my social work side. [...] I think in this relationship we really play off well one another” (Frontline Staff Member 1, personal communication, March 30, 2016).

Furthermore, both team members are young Muslims of colour: Frontline Staff Member 1 is a young woman of Pakistani origin, while Frontline Staff Member 2 is a young man of Somali origin.

Frontline Staff Member 1 stresses that her cultural and religious background informs her approach to the program and provides her with distinctive insights. As a practicing Muslim woman, she can empathize with the frustrations or identity crises many ReDirect clients are experiencing.

Young people have [multiple] identities, and these identities may not always fit with each other. [As a young person], you're getting mixed messages from the different groups to which you belong - religious, ethnic and national - and they're all telling you to live very differently.

Even my dad, who's Pakistani and came here when he was in his 30's, still asks himself at times if he's being too Canadian or whether he's being too Pakistani. Where does he fit? Here you have someone who's a really well educated, confident man and even he is asking these questions. So how could young people not struggle with same questions? (Frontline Staff Member 1, personal communication, March 30, 2016)

Frontline Staff Member 1 understands that for young people struggling to reconcile these subtle shades of gray, a de-pluralized, black and white religious message may appear particularly attractive. "I find, being a Muslim woman myself, that the identity of your religion is bigger, more encompassing, than any other identity you may have. Your religious identity goes deeper than whether you are a Pakistani or a Canadian" (Frontline Staff Member 1, personal communication, March 30, 2016). She notes that "while there is no answer on how to be a proper Pakistani Muslim", young people are attracted to people offering simple prescriptions where "someone can publicly declare: this is how to be a Muslim" (Personal communication, March 30, 2016).

According to Frontline Staff Member 1, one of her overarching goals for ReDirect is to model positive behaviour.

I hope that kids from certain backgrounds look at us and feel like, 'This person understands.' They look to us and see that we struggled with many of the same issues as them, but we made something positive out of it. [When talking to clients], I can firmly say that I've experienced Islamophobia. I tell them, 'Yeah, I've experienced it, but what can we do to deal

with it as a community in a positive way?' (Frontline Staff Member 1, personal communication, March 30, 2016)

For Frontline Staff Member 2, growing up in a neighbourhood with rampant gang activity informed his approach to ReDirect.

I remember, as a teen, being stuck between a rock and a hard place. I not only had to deal with these young thugs, but also with the police, trying to explain to them that I am not a criminal myself. I remember that challenge of running into police officers maybe once every two or three weeks, when they were called out to these neighbourhoods to deal with drug dealers, shootings and stabbings, robberies, etc. I'd have to identify myself and was perhaps treated like one of the bad kids, even though I wasn't (Frontline Staff Member 2, personal communication, March 30, 2016).

As a result, he empathizes with clients who are referred to the program and are inherently distrustful of police.

I remember meeting this client, and at the first meeting, the first thing he said was, 'I don't trust you because you're a police officer.' I replied, 'I respect that and I understand it. However, I will gain your trust and I will work on it' (Frontline Staff Member 2, personal communication, March 30, 2016).

Having dealt with his own frustrations and taken on a career in law enforcement, Frontline Staff Member 2 tries to instill a level of empathy among his clients.

I try to explain to them [that if they feel like they're being picked on by the police], they have to try to look at it from the police's perspective. Like them, there was a time when I would look at a situation and feel like I was being picked on just because the police don't like us. So I explain to the youth what I went through and explain that I understand what they're going through kind of makes a youth feel more at ease. And makes them realized that if I could do it, maybe they can do it too (Frontline Staff 2, personal communication, March 30, 2016).

Looking at ReDirect clients, Frontline Staff Member 2 sees young men searching for a purpose.

I think that's the key part, wanting to be important and *be* someone. If you're growing up in these environments and someone approaches you saying, 'You know what? I feel you're important and you matter. Come and join me.' – that really resonates with them. These young guys go from feeling like they're nobody to suddenly this group makes them tough and proud of themselves, proud of their background (Frontline Staff Member 2, personal communication, March 30, 2016).

According to Frontline Staff Member 1, the team's gender balance also complements their work (Personal Communication, March 30, 2016). As a woman and social worker presenting a 'softer approach, Frontline Staff Member 1 often gets approached by concerned mothers or family members looking for assistance. By contrast, the largely male clientele gravitates more towards the male police officer, Frontline Staff Member 2.

#### **8.4. Limitations and Challenges**

As this thesis previously indicated, ReDirect represents part of a shift in Canada's approach to radicalization, where municipalities are engaging to leverage their localized knowledge in the creation of radicalization prevention programming. Recent empirical evidence suggests that this localized approach holds the most promise. According to the Strong Cities Network, the key to successful CVE programming is that it is "locally designed, locally owned and locally led" (Raphael, 2016).

However, such an approach also presents several challenges. First, running a radicalization prevention program at the municipal level means that the primary determinant for whether a young person displaying vulnerabilities is aided by a program like ReDirect is not their level of need, but their postal code. Parent 1, the mother of a Canadian foreign fighter killed fighting with ISIS, expressed this as her primary frustration with approaches like ReDirect.

It is very localized and municipal. [...] So, you can have a family in Calgary who is able to take advantage of this great program. [But] if you have someone who is out of jurisdiction - just slightly even - try to reach in, they can't access it and that makes it very frustrating. I've already had some families come forward; they've tried to reach out to various programs [in their municipalities], but they just don't exist. So, it's very frustrating to see it available in

some places and in the meantime you still have kids leaving [to fight with ISIS from other cities], even under the age of 16, and nobody is doing anything (Parent 1, personal communication, April 22, 2016).

A second challenge with a de-centralized, municipality-led approach to radicalization prevention is that every jurisdiction has to begin the process afresh. Depending on local circumstance, the journey from initial concept to a fully running program can take several years and require buy-in from a wide range of stakeholders.<sup>18</sup> This lag between a municipality identifying radicalization to violent extremism as an issue and creating a program to counter it may mean that by the time an initiative is launched, the problem is no longer seen as imminent. In this regard, this model does not represent a quick fix to an urgent issue, but rather must be seen as a longer term investment. Calgary Police aimed to counter this issue by designing ReDirect to be versatile enough address various forms of violent extremism, or to even fold into its other community policing programming should it no longer be deemed relevant (Police Executive, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

Canada's new Liberal federal government has signalled that it is aware of the challenges inherent in this de-centralized model for radicalization prevention. In October 2015, it began addressing some of them by announcing plans to create an Office of the National CVE Coordinator (Office of the Prime Minister of Canada, 2015). Though the government is still exploring options on the office's structure and mandate, it has suggested that one of the functions of the office will be to serve as a centre for lessons learned from existing municipal radicalization prevention programs (Connolly, 2015). Another objective would be assisting municipalities in creating their own early intervention program in a shorter timeframe.

#### **8.4.1. Applying Nesser's Typology to ReDirect**

The following section will discuss the gaps and questions that arise when utilizing Petter Nesser's typology (2006) of a terrorist cell to municipal level radicalization programs such as ReDirect. From his empirical research, Nesser proposed four distinct profiles of individuals that recurred in terrorist cells: an entrepreneur, his protégé, misfits and drifters. Each of these four categories joins violent extremist groups for different reasons and holds different motivations for resorting to violence. The entrepreneurs at the heart of a cell are driven to violent extremism by a strong sense of justice. They are often socially and economically well-functioning. Protégés share many of the same traits as the entrepreneurs and tend to be very intelligent, well-educated and well-mannered persons, who excel

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<sup>18</sup> Refer to the overview of Focus Rexdale in Appendix 1 and the "babysteps" the program took to fully develop.

socially. Misfits are individuals who may do less well socially and may carry with them criminal backgrounds. They often join a terror cell as a means of coping with personal problems or out of loyalty to their friends. Lastly come the drifters, “go with the flow” and may join terror cells simply for being at the wrong place at the wrong time.

There are two assumptions in applying Nesser’s typology to a discussion on ReDirect. First, though Nesser reserves his typology to terrorist cells in Europe, here they are applied to a Canadian context. A comparison of Nesser’s typology to Canada’s two largest counter-terrorism investigations – The Toronto 18 and Project Samossa – reveal an elegant fit. Former Strategic Analyst corroborated this by revealing that Nesser’s typology has been informative to officials in the Canadian national security context (Former Strategic Analyst, personal communication, March 17, 2016). Second, although Nesser developed his typology to describe people engaged in groups that undertake violent extremism, here it is applied to individuals susceptible to radicalization or in the very early stages of radicalization.<sup>19</sup>

Viewing community policing programs such as ReDirect through the prism of Nesser’s typology uncovers some troubling limitations. Two of Nesser’s ideal types, entrepreneurs and protégés, are devout idealists who excel professionally, academically and socially. As such they simply would not come across the radar of a program like ReDirect, since they do not exhibit the ‘vulnerabilities’ that ReDirect is created to catch and try to address.

Two examples from the Canadian context further illustrate the extent of this limitation. Shareef Abdelhaleem was one of the main conspirators in the ‘Toronto 18’ case.<sup>20</sup> At the time of his arrest, Abdelhaleem was a successful, highly-educated IT engineer with a six figure salary. In addition to his ideological motives, Abdelhaleem also saw the attacks as a means for the group to make a handsome profit. Abdelhaleem was going to short the index of the Toronto Stock Exchange and make a significant returns when stock prices collapsed after the attack (Teotonio, 2010). Similarly, Momin Khawaja, arrested in 2004 for involvement in a plot to plant fertilizer bombs in the United Kingdom, led a quiet – if unexciting – life in suburban Ottawa. He was also a sociable, middle class professional who worked as a software engineer at Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs (Freeze, 2016).

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<sup>19</sup> Some radicalization scholars would contend with assumption, since they discount the links between motivators for radical thought and violent action (Borum, 2011; Jenkins, 2007).

<sup>20</sup> The ‘Toronto 18’ was an al-Qaeda-inspired group of 14 adults and 4 youth arrested on June 2, 2006 for planning a series of attacks against targets in Southern Ontario. The group planned to detonate a series of truck bombs in downtown Toronto.

Examining these two cases through Nesser's typology, both individuals would fall into the category of protégés. Moreover, neither one exhibits any of the 'vulnerabilities' which ReDirect is created to address. The social services and civil society representatives that make up the case planning team are the primary means for clients to get referred to the program, and also represent ReDirect's 'tool belt' to combat radicalization. However, even if a program like ReDirect existed in their respective cities, chances are that cases like Abdelhaleem and Khawaja's would have still occurred. Neither exhibited behaviours that would have flagged them to the community groups that make up a community policing early intervention program.

Asked to address these apparent limitations, the ReDirect Program Coordinator warned that the Calgary Police Service has not yet performed a systematic evaluation which would allow him to provide a definitive answer on the topic. However, he was also open to admitting that CPS is aware that the program will likely prove applicable only for the two latter categories of Nesser's typology, the misfits and the drifters.

However, the Program Coordinator framed this limitation as follows:

I think we can be OK with that. Looking [at Nesser's typology] as a triangle, the actual ideologues (the entrepreneurs and their protégés) are at the pinnacle. Numerically, there's very few of them because really, they're the leaders. [In Canada], we don't have thousands of those people. [And] simply put, these are not potential ReDirect clients. [ReDirect] is about starving these cells and organizations of their foot soldiers (Personal communication, March 31, 2016).

This explanation by ReDirect's Program Coordinator can be interpreted two ways. To some, this may appear as an explicit admission that the net Calgary Police is casting is – by design – not wide enough to catch every young person who may follow a path of radicalization. A cynical mind may even interpret this as a means of Calgary Police hedging their bets against criticism should the program fail with a particular case in the future.

However, an alternate explanation is to understand this acknowledgement of the limitations of early prevention programs within a community policing framework as a strength of the program. As this thesis has shown, the Canadian counter-terrorism / CVE landscape consists of several actors whose roles complement one another. Therefore, Calgary Police Service did not attempt to design a program that is comprehensive and able to catch all potential threats to the security of Canada.



Rather, the service carved out a niche for its distinctive role. This role leverages what Calgary Police perceives as its greatest strengths – a robust framework for community policing, long-term relationships with local community groups and a central role among Calgary’s government social services providers – while leaving open the room for other actors to take on the ongoing gap in coverage.

Calgary’s explicit acknowledgement of this limitation of community policing and early intervention programs sets it apart from other programs consulted for this thesis. This is particularly true of the RCMP’s fledgling CVE program, as described in Appendix 1. Neither of the informants associated with the program was able to speak to the limitations of their approach, particularly in reference to the limits that Nesser’s typology suggests. By failing to acknowledge this potential limitation of a community hub approach, programs such as the RCMP’s CVE program run the risk of inhibiting the creation of complementary approaches that would be better suited to deal with entrepreneurs and protégés in a pre-criminal space.

Despite these limitations of ReDirect, recent research on the growing crime / terrorism nexus holds interesting implications for the program. Basra, Neumann & Brunner (2016) assert that even though the presence of former criminals in terror groups is not unprecedented, the phenomenon has become more relevant to the ways in which jihadist groups operate. The study suggests that the jihadist narrative – as articulated by ISIS – provides a theological justification for continued criminality. Joining a terror group also provides a redemption narrative that allows former criminals to atone for past sins. The report argues that ISIS’ mobilization has flipped the traditional radicalization narrative. Instead of terrorism serving as a last resort for individuals driven by ideological grievances, ISIS increasingly attracts individuals looking to enact violence and provides them with ideological justification for their actions.

Interpreting these findings through Nesser’s typology suggests that there is a growing number of misfits joining ISIS and a relatively smaller number of entrepreneurs and protégés. So despite ReDirect’s acknowledgement that it may only be applicable to misfits and drifters, Basra, Neumann & Brunner’s findings suggest an increasingly important role for these types of radicalization prevention programs.

#### **8.4.2. Broadening CVE Approaches – A Warning Note**

As Chapter 7 presented, ReDirect provides an example of a wider trend happening in Canada – the broadening of CVE approaches by reframing radicalization as more than strictly a security intelligence / law enforcement matter. This broadening of CVE approaches mirrors the Welsh School’s normative preference for emancipation over mere lack of physical threat. Inevitably, such

an approach 'widens the tent' and brings in a wider range of stakeholders who have a role to play in countering violent extremism. This thesis describes ReDirect as one of these initiatives which brings in a wide range of community and government partners and aims to provide an individualized, intervention plan that addresses underlying vulnerabilities to radicalization. While ReDirect's specific efforts indicate signs of possible success, this thesis echoes the concerns voices by critics of the Welsh School's emancipatory project. Namely, that the approach does not offer guidelines for when an issue is not a security issue, thus always implying the more security, the better (Floyd, 2007, p. 333). Similar concerns arise when observing the rapid broadening of the CVE agenda over the last two years.

Over the course of developing this thesis, the author has noted that countering violent extremism (CVE) - or preventing violent extremism (PVE) as is favoured by some institutions - has become a trending buzzword within government circles. As governments and international institutions set aside funds for CVE or PVE programing, a wide range of organizations is vying to reframe their project as contributing towards countering violent ideology, regardless of empirical evidence to back up the validity of their efforts.

One recent example is the United Nations (UN), which published the UN Secretary General's Plan of Action for Preventing Violent Extremism in January 2016. The plan builds on the UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy from a decade earlier, which called for efforts to "to eradicate poverty and promote sustained economic growth, sustainable development and global prosperity for all", among many other things, in order to "address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism" (United Nations, 2006).

In early 2016, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) adapted the Secretary General's plan and drafted its own strategic document, which asserts that successful preventative work must "look beyond strict security concerns to development-related causes of and solutions to the phenomenon" (United Nations Development Programme, 2016). The UNDP lists several of the 'push factors' towards radicalization, including poverty and unemployment, perceptions of injustice, social-political exclusion, widespread corruption, and the mistreatment of certain groups. Unfortunately, there is limited empirical evidence to back up the UNDP's assertions.

More than a decade ago, Sageman's study of terror groups and their members revealed the false parallels drawn between economic and educational backgrounds and terrorists. He notably concluded, "There's really no profile, just similar trajectories to joining the jihad" (Sageman, 2004). Horgan and Taylor take similar issue with assigning causality to "setting events". "In a sense, factors

[such as education, income and employment] ... tend to be so general as to have little predictive value” (Taylor & Horgan, 2006, p. 592). The Canadian government’s research into radicalization backs up this conclusion. The Former Strategic Analyst spent a decade at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) studying the lives of some 300 to 400 individuals involved in the Sunni Islamist extremist milieu. The research project collected the tombstone data of these individuals with the aim of discerning a pattern that can be applied to future cases. He explains, “We collected [the tombstone data] and we found there were no patterns. Absolutely no patterns in what I call the ‘input data’” (Former Strategic Analyst, personal communication, March 17, 2016).

At a community and country level, evidence is equally murky if not outright contradictory. A study examining terrorist attacks in the last thirty years found no correlation between low GDP and incidence of terrorism, a conclusion which has been replicated by study after study across methodologies and time frames (Feldmann & Perälä, 2004; Goldstein, 2005; Newman, 2006; Piazza, 2006). A more recent study found that in fact countries with higher economic prosperity and lower inequality were *more* likely to see residents travel to Syria as foreign fighters, rather than less. Furthermore, unemployment was “not highly correlated” to overall foreign fighter activity (Benmelech & Klor, 2016).

And yet, the misconception lives on. At the Global Meeting on Prevent Violent Extremism through Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect for Diversity in March 2016, the presenters and attendees opined that secondary school education, Western style democracy and fostering political engagement presents the best way of inoculating communities from violent extremism (Personal communication, March 14, 2016).

The Former Strategic Analyst is exasperated at efforts to shoehorn legitimate development projects into a CVE framework despite the lack of empirical evidence.

You want improve education? Please go ahead – it’s a wonderful thing. You want to solve poverty? Please do so, as it would be a wonderful benefit to society. Just don’t tie that to radicalization. I swear to God if I hear one more person say that it’s vulnerable people who become disenfranchised and that’s how they become terrorists, I [will lose it]. I am sick and tired of hearing that. And people that say that have never actually worked with the data. It’s nothing but a gut, instinctual feeling (Former Strategic Analyst, personal communication, March 17, 2016).

Berger is equally critical of the rise of the CVE / development nexus. He asserts that even if there was a correlation between structural development factors and extremist violence, addressing these factors is not an efficient method to fight violent extremism, which in most countries engages less than one percent of the population. He worries that “attempting to ‘eradicate poverty’ in order to counter violent extremism simply puts a bigger and more intractable problem in front of a smaller and more manageable one” (Berger, 2016, p. 7).

To sum up, the Former Strategic Analyst explains,

Look, the UN is a lovely organization that does a lot of great work. But I get really nervous when I see people jumping on the radicalization bandwagon because it’s sexy and everyone is doing it. Just because everyone is doing it, does not mean everyone *should* be doing it (Personal communication, March 17, 2016).

#### **8.4.3. Known Unknowns**

As has been referenced previously, at the time of fieldwork, the program had only been running for six months, and no participant had fully completed ReDirect. As a result, many of the characteristics of the program are based on Calgary Police Service applying the lessons learned from the challenges and failures of other, similar radicalization prevention programs. The program has not had to test its resilience in face of failure to prevent radicalization in a client.

Though it has not happened yet, there will come a client with whom the program does not succeed. The young person will be brought into the ReDirect program, but the individualized intervention plan will, for one reason or another, not divert them from going down the path of radicalization. Despite the best efforts of the CPS and its community members, the young person will eventually commit a terrorism-related crime and be arrested by the RCMP. Former Strategic Analyst worries that,

You know as well as I do, the first time that somebody who went through the ReDirect program ends up as a CSIS or RCMP investigation, the accusations will be immediate and they will be widespread. ‘This was nothing but an intelligence gathering operation. You never really intended to help this person. Your goal was always to get to the point where you were laying charges in a court of law.’ You have to accept that even the world’s best intervention program is not a guarantee of success (Personal communication, March 17, 2016).

Frontline Staff Member 1 acknowledges that Calgary Police is aware of this challenge. Despite their best efforts at community outreach, ReDirect's resilience may be tested if the program does not succeed on a client. However, she counters that even an adverse outcome like that ought not to come as a surprise to anyone familiar with the program. ReDirect aims to be transparent about the program's role, as well as its limitations.

The number one thing is transparency; it's the only way in which we can operate. From the very start we're clear that if it's a security issue, we have to send it to the appropriate [investigative section]. The reality is we don't want to pretend to be something that we're not (Frontline Staff Member 1, personal communication, March 30, 2016).

ReDirect is also aware of the lack of performance indicators for radicalization prevention programs. To state with empirical certainty whether a program "works" one would have to run a counterfactual, which the social sciences do not allow. At the time of research, ReDirect was using the evaluation tools developed for ReDirect's sister programs - YARD and MASST - internally and by outside agencies. The Program Coordinator admits that these evaluation tools are not "completely clean" and do not fit the ReDirect framework as elegantly as if they were designed specifically for ReDirect.

While he admits that the lack of a specific evaluation tool for ReDirect runs counter to conventional wisdom, he explains that waiting for the development of a robust evaluation tool before launching ReDirect would have set the program's rollout back too far.

We've heard everywhere we've discussed evaluation: evaluation should be built in at the very start. Perfect! In an ideal world, I agree with you. But if we wait to get that building block in place, how many of these blocks do you need before you actually get going on something? (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 30, 2016)

As a result of this lack of a specific evaluation tool aimed at radicalization, the Program Coordinator admits that trusting the program at this point "takes a certain leap of faith" (Personal communication, March 30, 2016). However, he is more confident in the program's value when evaluating it within the wider framework of community policing in Calgary, where long-term social disorder trends reflect the value of CPS' approach.

If someone comes to the attention of ReDirect, they came to our attention for good reason. Somebody somewhere thought that they needed help. Whether it was because of radicalization, or they faced victimization and the potential of being drawn into traditional crime, that doesn't really matter. If we give that person help, we've done the right thing.

Now, because we're within the Youth and Community Services section, we have forty years of doing community policing and confidence in our approach (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 30, 2016).

## **8.5. Program Transferability**

### **8.5.1. Across Municipalities**

This section will discuss the fourth sub-research question: How transferrable is ReDirect model to other municipalities or across ideologies? By nature of being one of the first of its kind in Canada, ReDirect serves as a sort of 'pilot project' for municipal, community policing oriented, radicalization prevention programs. Municipal police forces across Canada that are debating standing up a similar program are looking towards Calgary Police to pick up lessons learned and to work out how a similar program can be adapted to their jurisdiction.

Federal Partner 3 underlined that the federal government sees community-level radicalization prevention programming as falling wholly outside of federal jurisdiction. There is no appetite at the federal level to adopt a national approach to this type of programming. "At the end of the day, things do have to be tailored to your local realities. Local jurisdictions are best placed really to decide how things would work best within their particular communities and within their structures" (Federal Partner 3, personal communication, March 24, 2016).

In light of this "let a hundred flowers bloom" approach to municipal CVE programming, one of the objectives of this thesis was to identify those features and lessons learned from ReDirect that may be applicable to other municipalities. The first feature of ReDirect transferrable to other jurisdictions is the 'community hub' framework, as demonstrated by the Multi-Agency Panel.<sup>21</sup> This approach brings together a number of community and government partners, including local school boards, Alberta Health Services, Calgary Community and Neighbourhood Services, correctional service workers from the Office of the Solicitor General and Public Security in Alberta, among others. The groups sit at a common table and develop an individualized intervention plan for each client. The

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<sup>21</sup> Refer to Chapter 6 for further information on the structure of ReDirect.

multi-disciplinary nature of this approach allows the model to adapt to the relatively wide range of factors that may make a youth susceptible to radicalization. Furthermore, the model allows the client to tap into a disparate range of government social services at one time.

The ReDirect Program Coordinator underlines that undertaking this approach may require police forces to reframe their understanding of radicalization to ideological violence. “If you understand radicalization as a societal issue and you understand that you need society to help with the challenge of radicalization, you’ve cracked half of the problem” (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016). Parent 1 concurs that a successful radicalization prevention program required the breaking down of “stone walls” between government agencies and civil society organization. Radicalization prevention programs “won’t work without it being a team effort, with everybody coming together at the same table, [and] sharing information” (Parent 1, personal communication, April 22, 2016).

This community hub framework has proven successful in a variety of community policing applications in Canada and internationally. In Denmark, the Aarhus Model is centred on so-called ‘info-houses’. These ‘info-houses bring together representatives from police districts and the municipality and their primary task is deal with individual cases and coordinate responses by various stakeholders at the table. This hub decides whether a given case requires police attention, or whether the individual would be better served by either programs created specifically for the prevention of extremism and radicalization, or more general ones that are available to all citizens, such as career counselling, assistance with housing or therapy (Hemmingsen, 2015, p. 29).

Within Canada, the northern Saskatchewan community of Prince Albert adopted Community Mobilization Prince Albert (CMPA) in order to combat the disproportionately high levels of criminality in this largely Aboriginal community. Within its first year of operation the program was considered such a success that it was adopted as a model for community policing programming province wide (Nilson, 2016, p. 29). Focus Rexdale is also based on this common framework. The program was launched at the neighbourhood level to combat growing gang activity in a pocket of Toronto (Representative of Focus Rexdale, personal communication, April 22, 2016). Since then, its mandate has grown to include CVE components within the program, after several young men left the neighbourhood to fight with ISIS.<sup>22</sup>

The second transferable feature of ReDirect is that a radicalization prevention program ought to – to the maximum extent possible – build on existing frameworks and programming, rather than try to

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<sup>22</sup> Appendix 1 provides a more in-depth overview of these programs.

start from scratch. This approach allows a fledgling program to leverage existing relationships and build on previous successes when launching CVE programming. The ReDirect Program Coordinator uses the Lego block analogy to describe ReDirect's place within the Community Youth Services framework: "All we've done is that we've come along with ReDirect and we've attached this Lego block to the existing community policing framework. That's our philosophy – we don't really need to reinvent the wheel here" (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

Despite her reservations regarding Canada's overall approach to radicalization prevention, Parent 1 agrees that these types of programs are most likely to succeed if they built on existing frameworks.

Calgary Police is in a unique position just because of the development they've done with the community. They've already worked in the pre-criminal space with youth. Actually, my younger son was part of their Multi Agency School Support Team (MASST) program, so I see [ReDirect] being really successful that way" (Parent 1, personal communication, April 22, 2016).

Applying this feature to other jurisdictions means that perhaps creating a separate radicalization prevention program may not be the most appropriate way to build on an existing framework. This has been the case in Toronto, where the police officers behind Focus Rexdale "always said from day one that [they] would never set up a hub just for CVE" (Representative of Focus Rexdale, personal communication, April 22, 2016). During early consultations with the Somali community in Rexdale, the Toronto Police Service found that the community was not interested in engaging with police on issue of preventing radicalization, since they did not see it as a major concern. Community groups were much more interested in engaging with the police on what they saw as the foremost social ill: gangs and drugs. In response, the Toronto Police Service was cognisant in layering the CVE component into existing programs aimed at at-risk youth more generally. "To us, [this approach] made sense because we already had the infrastructure in place, which was not put in place overnight - we had been building this for two years" (Representative of Focus Rexdale, personal communication, April 22, 2016). Furthermore, Focus Rexdale purposefully avoids labelling their initiative with the term "countering violent extremism" or "CVE". Toronto Police worries that this type of 'police speak' will alienate the very community groups it seeks to engage at the centre of its programming.

The third feature is that while police has a role to play in radicalization prevention programming, it should not be a central one. While the police can act as a meeting facilitator and case referrer, it is



usually the wrong actor to take a leading role in community-level radicalization prevention. On the surface, this conclusion may seem to counter the premise of this thesis – after all, ReDirect is a program run by Calgary Police Service. However, as all ReDirect staff underlined, the program was never designed to serve as a model for other jurisdictions. It is strictly a “made *in* Calgary, made *for* Calgary” approach.

As previous sections have pointed out, Calgary has several unique characteristics which make CPS the right actor in this jurisdiction to take the lead on organizing a program like ReDirect. First, it benefits from a 97% approval rating, which indicates the level of trust and credibility it enjoys among the general public as well as civil society organizations (Kaufman, 2013). Second, Calgary Police has a history of serving as a convenor of government partners and non-governmental groups within its other community policing programs. Several informants agreed that while this makes CPS a natural fit to administer a program like ReDirect, this would likely not be the case in many other municipalities. This sentiment was shared by not only informants directly involved with the program, but also those with an arm’s length relationship to it such as the Former Strategic Analyst and Parent 1.

Despite the seemingly solid foundation for the program, the Calgary Police Executive noted that the current set up for ReDirect may not necessarily be set in stone. While Calgary Police took the lead on standing up the program, it is open to taking a more backseat role once the program has been up and running for some time. Calgary Police sees the community and civil society groups at the centre of its community policing programs. As far as Calgary Police management is concerned, the more ownership of ReDirect the community takes on, the better; even if this means that the police service takes on a supporting role.

This lesson has been applied to Canada’s other two municipal-level radicalization prevention programs. In Focus Rexdale, the Toronto Police Service (TSP) serves as a convenor of civil society and government groups, but it aims to place these organizations at the centre, while minimizing its own role within the hub. Looking ahead, the police are explicitly encouraging community groups to take a more proactive role so that the police are only involved in cases of criminality. Montreal has taken this lesson even further, setting up the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence (CPRLV) completely independently of law enforcement. In Montreal context, this approach was deemed most appropriate, since the Montreal Police does not benefit from the same levels of community approval as Calgary Police, and does not enjoy the community’s confidence in being able to take a ‘softer’ approach required for community policing in a strictly pre-criminal space.

### **8.5.2. Across Ideologies**

Even though Calgary's ReDirect was launched in reaction to several young men departing Calgary to fight abroad with ISIS and its affiliates, the program aims to be versatile enough to engage with clients susceptible to radicalization toward violence in the name of all forms of ideology, whether religious, left-wing, right-wing or single issue extremism. The Program Coordinator explains the approach thus,

We may be dealing with events that are happening in the Middle East now, that doesn't mean in 10 years' time, that it will be the same thing. And that's not to say that we couldn't deal with that sooner. If the recent, isolated incidents of anti-Muslim sentiment we have had here [in Calgary] grow, we might be seeing more of that right wing [extremism]. So, we have to be responsive to both (Program Coordinator, personal communication, March 31, 2016).

In addition to the operational reasons behind a versatile prevention program, Former Strategic Analyst argues that it strengthens the program's credibility and dulls criticisms of Islamophobia. This has been an ever-present charge that has plagued fellow radicalization prevention programs, such as the United Kingdom's Prevent program (Kundnani, 2015).

The key is, when talking about violent extremism, one must talk about violence from across the ideological spectrum. You're not limiting it to young Muslims – you're just engaging anyone who is engaging in violence that has an ideological underpinning to it. If you make it as broad based as possible, people can't say to you, 'Well, you're just all about Muslims!' (Former Strategic Analyst, personal communication, March 17, 2016).

Taking on this versatile approach to a radicalization program may be particularly wise in light of Calgary's (and the province of Alberta's) uneasy history with Far Right extremism. The province continues to struggle with "heavy historical baggage" in its quest to overcome racism (Baergen, 2000, p. 284). In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Alberta was the only Canadian province to grant formal charter to the Ku Klux Klan and the organization is said to have enjoyed relatively widespread support. Although Far Right extremism and hate groups in Alberta have moved to the fringes over the last few decades, the province remains an epicentre for Canada's relatively small White supremacist movement (Gundlock, 2013). According to the Canadian Incident Database, supremacist extremist incidents since 2001 have primarily been concentrated in the province of Alberta. These

incidents typically involve unarmed or armed assaults and appear to be isolated and spontaneous incidents targeting individuals with specific racial or religious identities.

The success of the Hayat Germany program suggests that there is significant overlap between designing a successful radicalization prevention program for the Far Right and the Sunni Islamist extremist milieu. Let us remember that Hayat was created in 2011 and drew on the experiences of the EXIT Germany de-radicalization and disengagement programs for right-wing extremists (Koehler, 2013, p. 185) One of the key lessons learned from the EXIT program was that family members and relatives of neo-Nazis played a central role in helping prevent, decelerate and even invert the radicalization process. As such, Hayat works to strengthen family ties so that family members are able to provide the support these young people sought in extremist groups.

Unfortunately, not all initiatives have experienced similar successes applying the lessons learned from one extremist milieu to another. Norway experienced a dramatic rise on the Far Right movement in the mid 1990's, particularly in the Oslo suburb of Manglerud and the town of Brumunddal. By the early 2000's extremism began to decline, partly as a function of Norwegian police having developed preventative measures at the municipal level (Fangen & Carlsson, 2013, p. 330).

A central tool utilized by preventive police officers was the voluntary "empowerment conversation", in which a young person and his or her parents meet at the police station if the police are informed that the individual is becoming involved with a problematic group. The conversation takes a carrot and stick approach. On the one hand, the youngster is warned of the adverse consequences of continuing with their behaviours. On the other hand, the preventive police officer stresses that it is never too late for the youth to 'step off' the ladder to extremism and to be provided with assistance from social services partners.

These types of empowerment conversations proved successful with members of Far Right movements, especially those whose ideological commitment already wavered (Fangen & Carlsson, 2013, p. 344). The Norwegian police attempted to replicate the success of this method with youth radicalized towards Sunni Islamist extremism planning to travel overseas to fight with ISIS. Unfortunately, the move backfired: not only did the young men not respond positively to the meeting, the encounter with police served to embolden some of them and made them double down on their commitment to the ideology (Police Superintendent Bjørn Øvrum, personal communication, November 16, 2015). The underlying reasons for why this strategy worked for individuals subscribing to one type of extremist ideology and not another remains unanswered. One hypothesis suggests

that perhaps Far Right extremists, despite their anti-establishment rhetoric, maintained a fundamental reverence for state institutions and the police. This is in opposition to Islamist extremists, whose alienation from these state institutions and the police ran much deeper (Police Superintendent Bjørn Øvrum, personal communication, November 16, 2015).

## 9. Conclusion

The mobilization of Western foreign fighters to join the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has left governments in many countries searching for the most appropriate response. Calgary, Alberta, an economically dynamic city at the heart of Canada's resource extraction region, has not been immune to the foreign fighter phenomenon. By 2014 Calgary was developing a reputation as the home of one of Canada's most active clusters of foreign fighters joining ISIS and its affiliates. Like other governments in jurisdictions across Western Europe and North America, Calgary acknowledged that the response to Western foreign fighter mobilization lay in moving beyond 'hard' approaches (law enforcement and intelligence) and embracing the 'softer' approaches of early intervention and radicalization prevention. This latter category of programs is often labelled with the umbrella term of 'countering violent extremism' (CVE). This thesis examined one such CVE program – ReDirect – launched in September 2015 by the Calgary Police Service (CPS).

The research project focussed on ReDirect as a case study because it represents a first: it is the only dedicated municipal level, community policing, radicalization prevention program in Canada. The program's creation is part of a re-framing of CVE in the country. While municipal police forces have played a role in radicalization prevention programming in other countries for some time, this development is new to Canada. Traditionally, Canada has framed CVE as a national security issue which was addressed by federal agencies, such as Public Safety Canada (PSC), the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Municipal police forces have historically played a strictly defined support role, contributing manpower to local Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams, the RCMP-led national security investigative bodies. As such, programs like ReDirect represent a new direction for Canada's approach to CVE.

This research project was undertaken to fill a gap in literature on this fledgling municipal-level CVE programming. Given how recently Canada's reframing of CVE began, there are next to no academic studies of the shift and the promises and limitations of these municipal CVE initiatives. The study applied a qualitative research method and based its findings largely on primary source data collected during fourteen interviews with people with in-depth knowledge of the program. These interviews were conducted mostly during a field visit to Calgary in March 2016. Informants were chosen to represent six different profiles (frontline employees, Calgary Police Executive, community partners, potential clients / their families, federal government partners, representatives of similar programs), each with a different relationship to the project. This approach was chosen to bolster the study's internal validity by triangulating informant responses. The primary limitation of this project's data is its external validity: the findings of this research are best understood as subjective perceptions

rather than objective conclusions. Second, I relied on an intermediary (the ReDirect Coordinator) to facilitate contact with several informants. This sampling method may have affected the opinions provided by these informants. The information from interviews was supplemented by secondary source research conducted in spring and summer 2016. The bulk of secondary source research was devoted to learning more about ReDirect's counterpart programs in different countries.

To examine the promises and limitations of municipal CVE initiatives, the primary research question asked was: What is the distinct role of municipal policing programs such as ReDirect in tackling the national security issue of radicalization to violent extremism? This question was tackled in two ways: by looking at ReDirect's distinct role organizationally and functionally. At an organizational level, the research project aimed to examine how ReDirect fit into a framework designed for strictly federal agencies. This study found that community policing programs such as ReDirect represent one means of addressing the "intervention gap" which appears when CVE and radicalization are framed as a strictly national security matters under federal jurisdiction. While CSIS may identify individuals early enough in the radicalization process to make them suitable candidates for early intervention, their mandate prevents them from undertaking any action beyond advising government. On the other hand, while the RCMP's mandate includes national security threat prevention, the preventative work that the RCMP has undertaken has been strictly focussed on 'high risk travellers'. These are individuals on the cusp of violent extremism, who make more suitable candidates for disengagement and de-radicalization efforts rather than early intervention and prevention. Moreover, the RCMP has been overwhelmingly focussed on the criminal investigation part of its mandate. This means that by the time an individual would come to the RCMP's attention from CSIS, it would be far too late to undertake preventative measures. This "intervention gap" has been compounded by the former Conservative government's lack of focus on the Prevent strand of Canada's national counter-terrorism strategy and Public Safety Canada's resulting lack of support for preventative programming.

ReDirect represents one means of addressing this "intervention gap". As a result of its collaboration with civil society and government partners, ReDirect is created to become aware of individuals very early in the radicalization process, just as CSIS would be. By being a police force, like the RCMP, Calgary Police Service has the legal mandate to undertake early intervention and preventative actions in a pre-criminal space. By working at a municipal level, ReDirect is not subject to the strategic priorities defined by the federal government. Therefore, CPS was able to begin developing its ReDirect program even under the former Conservative government.

On a functional level, this study found that ReDirect plays a distinct role in several ways. Most importantly, ReDirect serves as a convener of civil society and government groups who together devise an individualized intervention plan for each of the program's clients. Calgary Police aims to place these organizations at the centre, while limiting its own role within the Multi-Agency Panel to the role of facilitator. As background to this finding, chapter 6 provided a broad overview of Calgary Police's community policing ethos, while chapter 7 provided a detailed overview of the ReDirect process and the central role that community partners play.

The thesis' first sub-research question asked: What are the securitization concerns with ReDirect and how does the program aim to address them? The research project applied the Copenhagen and Welsh Schools to discuss this issue. The Welsh School's analysis of constitutive parts and politicizing security offered a framework for the discussion of the recent widening of Canada's approach to CVE, while the Copenhagen School provided a useful means of understanding the critiques of radicalization prevention programs.

The Welsh School's widening of the concept of security to emancipation mirrors the broadening of CVE approaches in Canada. In the last 18 months there has been an acknowledgement that Canada cannot arrest its way out of the problem of violent extremism, and that the government (both at the federal and municipal level) must deploy softer approaches to complement law enforcement and intelligence efforts. Similarly, the Welsh School rejects the state as being at the centre of analysis. Instead, it sees security as a derivative concept. This approach provided a framework robust enough to capture the interplay between Canada's three levels of government (federal, provincial, municipal) and to analyze how the interactions between the three constitute the intersubjective understanding of security in regards to CVE.

The Copenhagen School concept of securitization provided a useful means of understanding the trepidations associated with a program like ReDirect. The primary criticism leveled against radicalization prevention programs is that they perform illegal intelligence gathering under the guise of community policing. This criticism has been leveled particularly vigorously against the UK's Prevent program. Calgary Police responds to this fear by purposefully operating ReDirect (as well as its wide range of similar community policing initiatives) at an arm's length from the law enforcement side. At the community level, securitization fears may arise if an ethnic or religious community perceives that it is deemed 'suspect' and handled by police in an extraordinary way. ReDirect is - at least partially - immune to this criticism because of the unique circumstances in which the program came to be. First, Calgary Police developed ReDirect at the request of the local Muslim community. Second, ReDirect employs the same community policing framework as CPS' other prevention

programs. Therefore, ReDirect represents a decidedly 'ordinary' response to radicalization and violent extremism. At the individual level, securitization fears are centred on concerns around being labeled a 'potential terrorist'. This thesis found ReDirect staff adamant about client confidentiality and ensuring that clients' identities do not leak beyond the program.

In answering the next sub-research question (How does the Calgary Police Service understand the process of radicalization and how does this understanding inform its approach?), the study found that the works of Taylor & Horgan, and Wiktorowicz to be instructive in the program's design. Taylor and Horgan conceptualize terrorism not as a psychological state of being, but rather as a process. In this regard, ReDirect is adamant that it does not use checklists to determine client eligibility, but rather focusses on a person's context. Despite this lack of a 'terrorist profile', Horgan lists predisposing risk factors that may predict possible radicalization, such as 'emotional vulnerability' in terms of anger, alienation or disenfranchisement, synonymous with feelings of being culturally uprooted or displaced and a longing for a sense of community. Several of these have played a role in defining how ReDirect approaches potential clients. The program is also designed to minimize the appeal of what Horgan dubs 'pull' factors (the internal, supportive qualities of a terror group that lures individuals into joining it) as much as counteracting 'push' factors (external forces that provide the push into terrorism).

Wiktorowicz's Framing Theory has similarly shaped ReDirect's approach to preventing radicalization. Specifically, the program aims to boost the exogenous factors as to minimize the depth and breadth of an individual's cognitive opening to violent extremism.

In regards to how the program understands radicalization, this research project found that Calgary Police draws a clear distinction between cognitive radicalization (radical thought) and behavioural radicalization (violent action). ReDirect focusses strictly on preventing actions that lead to violent extremism, as opposed to attempting to sway their clients away from 'radical thought'. However, the study noted that the recent case of Aaron Driver indicated that the distinction between these two types is not as clear cut in practice as it may appear on paper.

Next, the thesis discussed the third sub-research question: What are the perceived strengths and limitations of a municipal-level CVE program like ReDirect? It is important to acknowledge that at the time of fieldwork, ReDirect had only launched six months prior. No individual had completed the program and 'graduated' on the other end. Therefore, the discussion of strengths and weaknesses is best understood as informant perceptions rather than empirical conclusions. The primary strength of the program is that its design is very context-specific, aiming to leverage the strengths of existing



programs. ReDirect represents but a small 'Lego block' being tacked on to an existing, robust framework of community policing programs. This approach allowed ReDirect to 'plug into' existing relationships with government and civil society partners instead of having to create a program from scratch. Second, Calgary Police enjoys a particularly high level of trust within the community. This is, along with its role as a convener of a wide range of community services, meant that the program was created at the request of the local Muslim community. Third, the program has consulted with its community partners from the very beginning to ensure that the program matched the community's requirements. This approach ensured community buy-in from day one. Fourth, like with all Calgary Police community policing programs, ReDirect's frontline team consists of one police officer and social worker. This partnership allows the two frontline staff to bring complementary skills, resources and approaches to address each case. Furthermore, ReDirect's current frontline staff members are both Muslim and of a visible minority background. As a result, they personally identify with many of the issues faced by ReDirect clients and they aim to serve as positive role models. The primary challenge of a municipal-level radicalization prevention program like ReDirect is that it employs a localized approach to a geographically disparate issue. That is to say, the primary determinant for whether a young person is aided by ReDirect is not their level of need, but their postal code.

Applying Nesser's typology of a terror cell to ReDirect revealed certain limitations of a community policing approach to radicalization prevention. Nesser suggests four types of individuals that make up terror cells: entrepreneurs, protégés, misfits and drifters. When one compares the vulnerabilities that ReDirect is designed to address against the characteristics of Nesser's types, one finds that the program would only catch the drifters and the misfits. Nesser's other two types, the entrepreneurs and protégés, simply do not display vulnerabilities that would bring them to the attention of a program like ReDirect. Calgary Police is fully cognisant of this limitation and its implications. This acute awareness of the program's limits by its managers and staff provides ReDirect with a clear sense of its role and reinforces the need to cooperate with partner agencies in the CVE realm.

The discussion on the limitations of CVE projects concluded with a warning note regarding the broadening of CVE approaches. This warning mirrors critiques of the Welsh School's emancipatory project. Namely, that the emancipatory approach does not offer guidelines for when an issue is not a security issue, thus always implying the more security, the better. Similarly, CVE appears to have become a trending buzzword within government circles, as more and more organizations are vying to reframe their project as contributing towards countering violent ideology. This trend appears to be spreading regardless of the lack of empirical evidence to back up the validity of these efforts.

The last sub-research question tackled by this thesis was: How transferrable is the ReDirect model to other municipalities or across ideologies? This research project found that the primary transferable feature of ReDirect is the Multi-Agency Panel, which brings together government and civil society partners to create individualized intervention plans for each client. Second, ReDirect demonstrates the importance of building a new program on existing frameworks and programming to the maximum extent possible. However, ReDirect's signature feature – the central role of Calgary Police as a convener of government and civil society groups – is one which may not prove to be appropriate for most other jurisdictions. Calgary has several unique characteristics such as a forty year history of community policing, high police approval ratings, and a robust community policing framework, which make CPS the right actor in *that* city to take the lead on organizing a program like ReDirect. The framework may not necessarily prove suitable for other municipalities looking to create a similar program.

In regards to ReDirect's transferability across ideologies, the study discovered that while on paper the program is designed to counter a wide range of extremist ideology, empirical evidence from similar initiatives internationally provide mixed results. Germany successfully applied the framework from the Exit Deutschland program, aimed at Far Right extremists, to the fledgling Hayat initiative. On the other hand, Norway has had challenges replicating the success of its empowerment conversations to tackle the foreign fighter mobilization to ISIS. This issue may become particularly significant should Alberta re-emerge as a centre of the Far Right extremist movement in Canada.

Looking ahead, the topic examined here provides several avenues for further research. The resilience of a radicalization prevention program is truly tested following its first failure to 're-direct' an individual. The program's ability to withstand the subsequent securitization critiques surfaced in Chapter 7 will be telling. Thus, it would worthwhile to re-examine ReDirect following its first failed case to determine how the framework stood up to external pressures. Second, Calgary Police has acknowledged the current lack of empirical performance indicators for ReDirect. Once such performance indicators are developed, it would be interesting to complement this study's qualitative findings with a quantitative analysis. Third, should the Far Right extremist movement resurface in Alberta, it would be interesting to re-visit the program once it is deployed to tackle a wider range of extremist ideologies beyond the current ISIS-inspired foreign fighter phenomenon.

In sum, ReDirect provided an interesting case study and the thesis' findings suggest that the program provides one means for Canada to successfully tackle its radicalization "intervention gap". However, given the specific local circumstances which influenced the program's structure, there is considerably less certainty to what extent the ReDirect framework represents an ideal type for other

municipalities to follow. Regardless, if the recent past serves as a guide, the number of municipal-level programs is only set to increase in the future and radicalization prevention will remain a dynamic area of study for years to come.

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## **Appendix 1 - Overview of CVE Programs**

In discussing ReDirect, this thesis made several mentions of similar municipal-level radicalization prevention programs being administered in Canada and internationally. This appendix provides a more comprehensive discussion of six international and Canadian initiatives. The international programs discussed here preceded and inspired ReDirect; many of the lessons learned from these programs played a key role in defining the characteristics of ReDirect. The Canadian programs, meanwhile, exemplify the breadth of approaches taken in municipalities looking to implement a CVE program best suited for their conditions.

### **United Kingdom – Prevent Channel Program**

The United Kingdom was one of the early adopters of preventative measures to counter radicalization. Following the July 7, 2005 (7/7) attacks, the United Kingdom shifted its strategy from a primarily reactive, intelligence and law enforcement approach, to a more preventative one. This approach identified communities as key partners in fighting radicalization, underlining that it is ultimately communities who are able to defeat terrorism. The government introduced programs aimed to address the deeper causes of terrorism, rather than simply police criminal violent acts (Griffith-Dickson et al., 2014, p. 27). Within four years of the 7/7 attacks, the British government rolled out “the biggest and most ambitious experiment in terrorism prevention in the history of modern counterterrorism” (Romaniuk, 2015, p. 18). The broad goals of Prevent programming are to identifying vulnerable individuals, to address structural problems that contribute to radicalization, and to challenge the ideologies that extremists believe can justify the use of violence (HM Government, 2006). These goals were implemented by developing programming for education and social service organisations, as well as through support for community organisations (Thomas, 2010, p. 444).

The Prevent strategy has proven to be a contentious approach and marred in controversy. The most-often cited criticism of the strategy has been that Prevent programming has widely stigmatized the whole British Muslim community (Briggs, Fieschi, & Lownsborough, 2006; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Kundnani, 2015; Thomas, 2010). The government’s focus on the Muslim community may seem natural given the Islamist threat faced by the United Kingdom, however the way it has been framed and operationalised has been “damagingly counterproductive” (Thomas, 2010, p. 445). For example, the amount of funding for Prevent projects has been determined not by undertaking any risk-assessment, but simply by the size of the Muslim population in a given city. This despite the fact that there is no evidence that terrorists are more likely to emerge from ‘dense’ Muslim communities (Finney & Simpson, 2009). Similarly, the Prevent strategy has been accused of securitizing the

provision of a broad range of social services, such as re-defining community-level capacity-building initiatives through the prism of an anti-terrorism agenda. This approach has been criticized for painting the British Muslim community as a whole with the broad brush of being susceptible to terrorist involvement and reinforcing the otherness of Muslim communities (Thomas, 2010, p. 447). A 2011 government review of the Prevent strategy acknowledged that “previous Prevent work has sometimes given the impression that Muslim communities as a whole are more ‘vulnerable’ to radicalisation than other faith or ethnic groups” (HM Government, 2011, p. 7).

Second, criticisms have been leveled at the Prevent strategy for following a simplistic, linear understanding of radicalization with a misguided focus on “challenging extremist (and non-violent) ideas” (HM Government, 2011). This approach fails to draw a clear distinction between belief and action and thereby creates a category of speech which is lawful but considered by the government to be illegitimate. While many people in British society from a wide range of communities hold opinions that are anti-democratic or illiberal, the British government has only defined Muslims criticisms of Western culture or politics as ‘radical’ or extremist’ (Kundnani, 2015, p. 26). Similarly, by failing to draw this distinction between belief and violence, the government has opened itself to criticism of serving as a religious arbiter, taking on extremists in a war of ideas and attempting to engineer a new type of “British Islam” (Romaniuk, 2015, p. 19).

Third, the Prevent strategy has faced criticism from multiple sides for their choice of grassroots partner organizations. The government has oscillated between employing a ‘means-based’ strategy or a ‘value-based’ strategy. The former interprets Islamist terrorism in Great Britain as a socio-political phenomenon. It calls for engaging with groups and individuals who can work constructively with such young men, regardless of ideological difference. For example, the Metropolitan Police’s Muslim Contact Unit has worked constructively with Islamist groups who dislike British society but who vehemently oppose violence (Birt, 2009). While this approach is supported by strong empirical evidence, the 2011 program review frowned upon some of these relationships, noting that some Prevent program beneficiaries “have held views that are not consistent with mainstream British values,” further conceding that “there have been cases where groups whom we would now consider to support an extremist ideology have received funding” (HM Government, 2011, pp. 6, 58). The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) is one such group whose funding was cut from the Prevent strategy for not having taken a sufficiently robust position against Islamist terrorism at home or abroad.

A ‘value-based’ approach calls for supporting groups whose religious message is in line with British values and has been the more dominant force guiding the Prevent strategy, particularly under the Conservative government since 2010. The Cameron government took a more hawk-like view of

partnerships, marginalizing groups that were identified as 'Salafi' or as 'Islamist' - 'promoting British values' took predominance over 'empowering communities' (Griffith-Dickson et al., 2014, p. 32). This tactic has given Prevent critics the impression that the government is overtly intervening to shape religious practice and to promote new types of community leadership within Muslim communities. In essence, it securitizes multi-culturalism and frames issues involving Muslims through the lens of clashes of identity that can only be resolved through assimilation (Kundnani, 2015, pp. 26, 35).

Fourth, while Prevent is designed to operate completely separate from law enforcement and intelligence, Prevent measures are often perceived as cover for the development of "the most elaborate systems of surveillance ever seen in Britain" (Kundnani, 2015, p. 8). While the actual evidence of Prevent being used for covert surveillance is very limited, the impression has taken firm hold. This concern was echoed in the 2011 program review, which admitted that "one of the most damaging allegations made about Prevent [...] has been that it has strayed into the area of [intelligence and law enforcement] and become a means for spying on Muslim communities" (HM Government, 2011, p. 31).

In 2007, Channel, a community-level intervention program under the Prevent umbrella, was launched as a pilot project in Lambeth, South London and Preston in Lancashire, Northwest England. Channel focusses on providing early intervention to people who are identified as vulnerable to being drawn towards violent extremism. The program aims to identify individuals at risk, assess them, and develop the most appropriate support plan for the person of concern (HM Government, 2010). While the principal target audience for the Channel process are individuals vulnerable to recruitment to Al-Qaeda-affiliated, influenced and inspired groups, the program is designed to be equally relevant to those who may be targeted by other violent extremist groups (Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2016).

The Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT), which administers Channel at the national level, provides communities with a high degree of flexibility to implement the Channel framework as they see best fit for local circumstance. The base requirement is that each community maintains a multi-agency panel to assess persons of concern and forward their case to a community partner who provides a personalized intervention. Beyond this general framework, the towns are given the freedom to adapt the program to local circumstance as they see fit. Every town is encouraged to leverage existing cooperation between local authorities, the police, statutory partners and representatives of local communities, as to ensure the greatest chance of success (Ranstorp & Hyllengren, 2013). As a result, the two Channel pilot projects differed significantly. Preston in Lancashire, Northwest England worked closely with Special Branch and was more covert in its

activities. Lambeth, South London, on the other hand, put considerable work into developing community partners as providers of the interventions that lie at the heart of Channel (Griffith-Dickson et al., 2014, p. 31).

The program is organised by the Channel Coordinator, often a police officer working at the local level. Their role is to establish and maintain a multi-agency panel to enable risk assessment and decision making, and develop strong relationships with partners locally. The main work of the Channel process is conducted through the multi-agency panel. It is usually chaired by the local authority and includes statutory and community partners along with the Channel Coordinator. Depending on the nature of the case, the panel may include police, local authority Prevent lead, schools, youth offending services, health services, social workers, housing, probation, voluntary organisations and charities (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2016).

### **Denmark – The Aarhus Model**

The Aarhus Model, originally launched as a municipal-level pilot project, remains to this day one of the marquee projects in this field. In 2007, radicalization was added as a new ‘parameter of concern’ for police officers, social workers and other employment groups who work with young people in the municipality, such as school teachers and employees at youth centers (Hemmingsen, 2015, p. 104). Rather than creating new physical infrastructure, radicalization was added to the list of issues already being addressed by existing frameworks and projects, such as drug abuse, shoplifting, aggressive behavior and truancy. In 2008, the municipality complemented these efforts by setting up an information centre and a hotline.

In 2011, the project’s operations and leadership were passed over to SSP Aarhus, a pre-existing framework which involves close integrated cooperation at local level between schools, social services and the police. This multi-stakeholder approach to prevention, based on the close cooperation between law enforcement and social service agencies and revolving around information sharing to identify potential future problems and deploy early intervention measures, has been running successfully for over a generation (Hemmingsen, 2015, p. 18). This framework has been in place since 1975 and is currently implemented in 250 of Denmark’s 275 municipalities (European Forum for Urban Security, 2016). The primary purpose of the SSP networks has been to prevent young people under the age of eighteen from entering criminal environments, adopting an extremist or anti-social behaviour (Ranstorp & Hyllengren, 2013, p. 17).

Crucial to the Aarhus approach is the appreciation that terrorism is a crime comparable to other types of crime, and that extremism and radicalization are risks especially to vulnerable young

people, rather than as an existential threat to the state and the existing order (Hemmingsen, 2015, p. 19). Consequently, preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization was incorporated into existing conceptualizations of the prevention of crime, with radicalization becoming just another parameter of concern for youth workers. Furthermore, the early intervention and preventative approach to radicalization fit effortlessly with the Danish state's approach to other social projects, such as health care or child care.

Under the Aarhus Model, radicalization prevention programming is run by so-called 'info-houses': hubs designed to deal with individual cases and to coordinate responses by various stakeholders. Info-houses undertake the initial assessment of a case referred to the SSP and triage whether the case at hand is appropriate for the centre. Once a case is deemed appropriate, the centre has various options at hand. There may be programs specifically created for the prevention of extremism and radicalization, or more general ones that are available to all citizens, such as career counselling, assistance with housing or therapy (Hemmingsen, 2015, p. 29). Several 'info-houses' also run counselling for the concerned parents of youths at risk of radicalization, as well as individualized counselling for the youths themselves. Furthermore, the SSP framework launched a mentorship program in 2011. The objective is that mentors can model positive behaviour and provide their younger mentees with basic life skills and career and school coaching (Agerschou, 2014, p. 8).

The Aarhus model has undergone several changes since the first pilot project in 2007. One of them has been the disassociation of integration and discrimination policies from security policies (Lindekilde, 2015). In other words, there has been a narrowing of the CVE agenda by de-coupling efforts to battle radical ideas from efforts to prevent violent acts. Instead of aiming to reform the 'radical' ideas that youth at risk of violent extremism may hold, the programs take on a more behaviourist approach and aims to counter potential violent actions.

Second, the Aarhus model has adopted a more complex and nuanced understanding of radicalization than the simple phase-models, with linear, identifiable stages through which an individual passes en route from being an 'ordinary' citizen to becoming a terrorist.<sup>23</sup>

An ongoing discussion in the Aarhus model revolves around the inclusion of civil society, such as NGO's and private actors, in Denmark's efforts to prevent and counter radicalization and extremism (Hemmingsen, 2015, pp. 44-45). The Aarhus model stands apart from the programs deployed in most other countries in its sole reliance on state institutions to deliver the program. Although there have been increasing calls to re-examine this exclusion of civil society, others have urged caution and

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<sup>23</sup> This model was proposed in the New York Police Department (NYPD) *Radicalization in the West* report (Silber & Bhatt, 2007).

questioned whether this is necessary in Denmark. This second group is concerned about repeating the missteps of the United Kingdom's Prevent Strategy. Namely, they worry about distributing funds to organizations whose objectives and ideological leanings can clash with the government's national strategy (HM Government, 2011). By relying on external civil society actors, the state automatically legitimizes those institutions. Similarly, they are skeptical of partnering with private sector organizations on CVE work. Since private sector partners are inherently motivated by profit, they may have an interest in boosting rather than minimizing the threat.

## **Germany – Hayat**

Hayat (meaning "life" in Arabic and Turkish) is Germany's intervention and prevention program run by the Centre for Democratic Culture (ZDK) in Berlin. It is aimed at persons involved in radical Salafist groups or on the path of a violent jihadist radicalization (Hayat-Germany, 2016). Hayat was created in 2011 and drew on the experiences of Germany's de-radicalization and disengagement program for Right-Wing extremists: EXIT-Germany (Koehler, 2013, p. 185). The Hayat program is premised on the belief that the lessons from working on de-radicalizing right-wing extremists can be applied to intervention and prevention for potential radical Islamists as well (Temple-Raston, 2016).

According to the Former Strategic Analyst, this adaptation of a Far Right de-radicalization program into the ISIS foreign fighter milieu strengthens the program's credibility. "[The program] has the great advantage that it first began as a neo-Nazi initiative. It had nothing to do with Muslims at first. The beauty [of the program] is that because it did not start that way, it cannot be perceived as Islamophobic" (Personal communication, March 17, 2016).

One of the key lessons learned from the EXIT program was that family members and relatives of neo-Nazis played a central role in helping prevent, decelerate and invert the radicalization process. In that vein, Hayat works with radicalized persons as well as their family members, friends, acquaintances or employers. Hayat aims to strengthen family ties so that parents and siblings are able to provide the support these young people were missing and subsequently sought and found in extremist groups (Ranstorp & Hyllengren, 2013).

Hayat runs a 24/7 radicalization hotline, frequented most by concerned parents who worry that their child has changed in a radical Islamic direction. The Hayat councillors provide an initial assessment to determine whether the individual's actions are indeed of concern. As necessary, Hayat's psychologists provide emotional support and advice about how parents can most constructively approach their concerns with their children (Ranstorp & Hyllengren, 2013, p. 16).

Once the counselor gained a clear picture of the concrete situation, an individual counseling process and step-by-step plan is designed. In this respect, Hayat works as a bridge between a network of social service providers and concerned families. One example of a service with which Hayat may offer parents is the use of religious mediators. Hayat emphasizes that successful radicalization prevention must counter the ideological narratives of extremist groups and disrupt the social separation and ideological isolation that these groups require (Koehler, 2013, p. 187). In this regard, the program understands that a client's parents are seldom experts on Islam and have difficulty arguing with their children on theological grounds. Therefore, the program uses religious mediators who reach out to the person in danger or at risk of radicalisation. The mediator tries to build trust and to use good examples in order to get the individual to reject radical ideas (Ranstorp & Hyllengren, 2013, p. 17).

Hayat's approach differs from similar CVE programs by placing the family at the centre of its program. In fact, its counselling services may not necessarily include the radicalized person himself. The central goal of Hayat is to support, strengthen and empower the family of a radicalized person. In cases where the centre assesses that the family member is already radicalized, including this individual in family counselling sessions is not only pointless but also counterproductive. "The entire counselling process would lapse as soon as the [...] radicalizing person gets involved without his own initiative due to the fact that the counselling service will be interpreted as ideological tool for manipulation of the adversarial system (of the faithless / *kuffar*)" (Koehler, 2013, p. 192).

In cases where the individual is deemed to be in a pre-radicalization stage, their participation in the family counselling is encouraged, since strengthening family bonds may counteract some of the underlying vulnerabilities to radicalization. In summary, the main goal of Hayat is risk prevention, to facilitate a positive effect on their client through the family, and to support and empower the family of a radicalizing youth.

### **Montreal – Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization**

In March 2015, the City of Montreal, in partnership with the Government of Quebec, launched the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence (CPRLV), a non-profit organization whose aim is to prevent acts of violence related to radicalization, and to support individuals affected by the issue, whether radicalized individuals, individuals undergoing radicalization and their family, or teachers and professionals in the field (Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence, 2016). The centre aims to stop the spread of extremism, identify individuals that are in a process of radicalization toward violence and contribute to their disengagement.



The centre employs psychologists who take on individual cases and work with the individual and their families by providing psychosocial support. The centre runs a 24/7 hotline to receive calls, many of which come from parents concerned about their child's potential path towards radicalization. In the first eight months of service, the centre received some 475 calls, of which eight were forwarded on to the police. Based on the cases in these phone calls, social workers affiliated at the centre met with 93 families seeking support and assistance (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2015).

In the Canadian context, the CPRLV is unique in its complete independence from municipal or provincial law enforcement bodies. As this thesis suggested, there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to early intervention programs, but rather local factors must dictate the framework to assure success. In Montreal's case, the success of the anti-radicalization centre appears tied to maintaining an arm's length relationship with the Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) (Montreal Police Service) and Sûreté du Québec (SQ) (National Police of Quebec), the provincial police force.

The organization sees its role as a 'bridge' between citizens and police, so that individuals worried the suspicious behaviour of an acquaintance or a loved one do not automatically draw the attention of the police. According to the centre's director, community trust lies at the centre of the CPRLV's operations, and the Montreal community does not trust law enforcement to handle these issues in an anonymous and confidential manner (Madrid+10: Stop Violent Extremism, 2016). These concerns were echoed by the ReDirect Community Partner – born and raised in Montreal himself (Personal communication, March 31, 2016).

Media coverage suggests that this antipathy between the SPVM and the radicalization centre may be mutual. The head of the Montreal police officer's union dismissed the work of the anti-radicalization centre by noting that the centre has only forwarded a handful of intelligence tips to law enforcement (Muisse, 2016). This apparent misunderstanding of the *raison d'être* of a radicalization prevention program underlines the antipathy between the parties.

Montreal's anti-radicalization centre has received international accolades, including from the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who visited the centre in February 2016. Ban held up the centre as a unique model for other cities around the world to emulate (Feith, 2016). Within a year of CPRLV's launch, Brussels embraced the "Montreal model" and opened its own anti-radicalization centre. Similar to Montreal, the centre in Brussels aims to keep police out of the picture unless absolutely necessary to address an imminent threat (Solyom, 2015).

## **Toronto – Focus Rexdale**

The City of Toronto, with the Toronto Police Service (TPS) as the lead agency, has taken its approach to CVE to an even more localized level than the municipality – the neighborhood level. The TPS is currently working with community partners to roll out a CVE component embedded within its “community hub” approach. These hubs – starting with Focus Rexdale – provide a ‘wraparound approach’ to prevention and early intervention. The hubs were created to provide early intervention on a broad range of social issues, from youth dealing with bullying at school, mental health issues and gang issues. The hub brings together representatives from 17 organizations (Toronto School Board, Ontario Ministry of Health, the United Way, mental health organizations, Toronto Police Service, Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, youth service and outreach organizations, among others) who work together to tailor an individualized intervention plan for the youth at risk.

This hub approach was based on the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV), created in 2005 to take on Glasgow’s problem with knife fighting and gang crime. At the time, Glasgow held the unenviable reputation as the murder capital of Western Europe. The CIRV has three basic components: increased maximum sentences for carrying knives and a zero-tolerance police approach; a pledge from assorted agencies and charities that if youths renounce violence, they can get help with education, training, job-finding; and a powerful, personal message from former gang members and victims’ parents (Henley, 2011).

A decade in, the initiative’s results have been promising. Glasgow’s murder rate has more than halved, from 39 in 2004-05 to 18 last year (Geoghegan, 2015). Among the 200 gang members directly involved with CIRV, violent offending fell by nearly fifty percent. The program had a ripple effect across the community and even among gang members who had not attended meetings, violence had fallen by almost a quarter (Geoghegan, 2015).

The CIRV approach was first brought to Canada by police in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. A relatively small town of 35,000, Prince Albert was experiencing a significant rise in crime, including intoxicated persons, missing persons, domestic violence, graffiti, property crimes, poor housing, hotspot areas and gangs (Prince Albert Police Service, 2009). Prince Albert adapted the CIRV model in 2011 under the name Community Mobilization Prince Albert (CMPA) or the “Prince Albert Hub”. The multi-disciplinary team, consisting of various community agencies, including the Prince Albert Police Service, local school boards, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services, meets twice weekly. The agencies work together to identify at-risk children and youth, share information on the individuals and families involved and develop integrated, targeted

intervention strategies (Public Safety Canada, 2013). Within its first year of operation, the CMPA initiative contributed to an overall drop in Prince Albert's crime rate by 11%, the number of public prosecutions dropped by 12% and emergency room visits declined by 11% (Public Safety Canada, 2013).

The CMPA approach resonated with the Toronto Police Service (TPS) in the Rexdale neighborhood of Toronto, where underlying socio-economic factors contributed to violence and gang activity (Otis, 2015). Acknowledging that the TPS will not "arrest its way out of the problem", the police launched a hub model to deal with individuals at an "acutely elevated risk" of being involved in social disorder, crime, or victimization (Representative of Focus Rexdale, personal communication, April 22, 2016).

Toronto Police's approach stands out in relation to the other programs discussed in this chapter in that it deploys a neighborhood-level approach to early intervention. The original community hub was opened in 2013 in Rexdale; the TPS plans to operate a total of four community hub centres by the end of 2016.

Toronto Police purposefully tacked CVE programming on top of this community hub framework rather than dealing with radicalization to violent extremism as a separate issue. This allowed the TPS to leverage the existing infrastructure developed to tackle gang violence. Second, the approach places it more in line with the community's concerns, which do not see ideological violence as a separate issue, but rather as a social ill in line with gang violence, drug dealing, substance abuse and domestic violence. The Toronto Police Service even steers clear of the term "countering violent extremism". "We don't even use the term CVE. To start going out to communities and start talking about violence or extremism all the time is not the right approach. When we talk to our community partners [...] we talk about [...] vulnerable individuals (Representative of Focus Rexdale, personal communication, April 22, 2016).

The third key to success has been the "baby steps" pace at which the program has been rolled out in Rexdale. The TPS stresses that Focus Rexdale is a community-drive, community-led initiative in which the police playing a support role. Therefore, "[though] it has taken us forever to get to this point, working at this pace is what the community is comfortable with" (Representative of Focus Rexdale, personal communication, April 22, 2016).

## **RCMP – National Security Awareness and Community Outreach**

The final program discussed in this appendix is being developed by Canada's national police force, the RCMP, within its National Security Awareness and Community Outreach section (*Hearing to study and report on security threats facing Canada*, 2014). The RCMP is rolling out a program that

aims to identify individuals who are potentially at risk of radicalization in order to provide them with individualized intervention plans within a community hub framework. Like many of the models discussed in this section, it is loosely based on the Britain's Channel program and the Aarhus Model.

Although the program has taken on several cases, at the time of writing it is still in the 'pilot' phase and has not officially launched. At this early stage, the program has engaged what the RCMP classifies as 'high risk' individuals that do not pose an imminent threat to national security. This high risk category includes individuals susceptible to becoming so-called lone wolf actors or potential travellers to conflict zones (Federal Partner 2, personal communication, April 4, 2016). Though these individuals come to the RCMP's attention through national security investigations, the program deals strictly in a pre-criminal space and does not engage with individuals who are suspected of having crossed the criminal threshold.

The RCMP's National Security Awareness and Community Outreach section begins the analysis of each case with a battery of assessment tools. Following this indirect assessment, the RCMP meets with the individual and their family to undertake further direct assessment and to gauge the individual's amenability to participating in the program. The program is fully voluntary, and as such only people willing to acknowledge that they may require assistance go into the program (Federal Partner 1, personal communication, April 7, 2016).

The extent of the RCMP's involvement depends on the jurisdiction. In a city like Calgary, which has the ReDirect program, the RCMP would engage in an initial assessment, but then hand over the case to the Calgary Police Service. In municipalities without a similar intervention program but with its own law enforcement agency, the RCMP may undertake a more hands-on approach, helping the local police service put together intervention plans connecting the individual with the appropriate human service providers, whether at the municipal, provincial or federal level. In communities where the RCMP also serves as the local police force, the full intervention plan is organized and executed within the RCMP, split between headquarters in Ottawa and the regional office.

## Appendix 2 - Informed consent form



### Informed consent

You are being asked to take part in a research study concerning Calgary Police Service's ReDirect program. This study is being conducted by Peter Ottis, MSc student in International Relations at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), and supervised by Stig Jarle Hansen, professor at NMBU and Ingvild Magnæs Gjelsvik, researcher at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI).

Any concerns about this study may be directed to Ingunn Bohmann, student adviser for the International Relations program at NMBU, by e-mail at [ingunn.bohmann@nmbu.no](mailto:ingunn.bohmann@nmbu.no) or by phone at +47 64 96 53 31.

Your participation is important to this research and we appreciate that you are taking the time to help.

Names, information and details provided in this interview will be used exclusively for academic purposes, and won't be made available for other purposes and third parties. Besides the principal investigator, Peter Ottis, and his supervisors no person will have access to the collected data.

No individually identifying information will be reported or cited, except in cases where the interviewee has given his/her consent and permission. Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to provide any information that you do not wish to provide, or answer any questions that you prefer not to answer. If, at any time, you decide not to continue, you may simply say so and the interview will be terminated.

By signing below, you indicate that you have read and understood what is being asked of you, and that you consent to participate.

### Interviewee:

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<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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### Interviewer:

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<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelig universitet  
Noregs miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet  
Norwegian University of Life Sciences

Postboks 5003  
NO-1432 Ås  
Norway