

‘What does Terrorism look like?’: University Lecturers interpretations of their Prevent Duties and fighting Extremism in UK Universities

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Abstract

The UK Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) calls for a partnership between the government, individuals, organisations and communities to prevent the radicalisation of people and to prevent their participation in terrorist and illegal activities. As part of this strategy universities have a statutory duty placed upon them to remain vigilant to signs of extremism. Based upon 20 interviews with UK university lecturers the paper examines reactions of the academic community to this governmental mandate. Key to our understanding is the deputisation of lecturers into a security regime and how they perform the duty of identifying and monitoring extremism. Equally, forms of lecturer resistance are evident in how lecturers understand their new roles, and for universities themselves a conservative approach to risk may be gaining traction. We argue there is confusion around the duty based upon its ambiguity and that this has instructed conservative and defensive reactions that have subsequently produced concern amongst lecturers and a debilitating effect within UK universities.

Key Words: Prevent; Radicalisation; Extremism; Universities; Security, Counter-Terrorism

Introduction

Recently we took part in the UK's Home Office counter terrorism e-learning training package (we had not been instructed by our institution to do this but did so out of curiosity). The package has been designed for public sector workers, including those working in universities, and guides users through a series of questions and possible answers. Presented are indicators that users should 'look out for' as part of their role in helping to combat terrorism in the UK (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 – What does terrorism look like?

[Figure 1 near here]

(HM Government, 2016)

The initial questions in the package relate to the meaning of 'terrorism', then users are directed to the actual behaviours that might be a cause for concern, for example, 'absenteeism', 'crying' and 'unhealthy use of the Internet' (see Figure 2). The suggestion is, if your students display these behaviours, then they may be in danger of extremism.

Figure 2 – Behaviours that cause concern

[Figure 2 near here]

Participating in this training prompted us to think about what university staff are being asked to do. Overlooking the disquiet we felt about viewing our students with suspicion, we were perplexed as to how we could identify a terrorist or terrorism? Following our experiences, we also wondered do other academics express similar reservations toward their counter terrorism duty and how does this new role impact on their university responsibilities? Therefore in the paper we examine how the academic community is reacting to its new found role. Framing

our thoughts are the reactions of academics, as well as the challenges such strategies pose to the intellectual freedoms that underpin the academy.

The context to the paper is the *Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015* (hereafter CTSA), an act that was “fast-tracked” through Parliament (House of Lords, 2015) and one that mandates ‘specified authorities’ (including universities) must engage with a counter terrorism strategy. As Theresa May - then Home Secretary – stated,

From 1 July the new statutory Prevent duty for specified authorities will commence...Once this has been fully implemented it will require local authorities, the police, prisons, probation services, schools, colleges – and yes, *universities* too – to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism...This will ensure that Prevent activity is consistent across the country and in all those bodies that work with those who may be vulnerable.” (Home Office 2014a).

In the UK tackling extremism has led to a wave of counter-terrorism policies and anti-terrorism legislation, however, extremism has remained a nebulous term with many interpretations and definitions (Eatwell and Goodwin 2010; Mythen & Walklate 2016). Indeed, critics argue the term is far too broad and in recent years it has problematically converged with a series of other ideas and terms such as ‘British values’; ‘fundamentalism’; ‘radicalisation’; ‘Islamism’ and ‘terrorism’ (Awan 2012). Problems with the UK government’s attempts to define extremism are multifarious but one particular result of the aforementioned convergence has been the impression that extremism is overwhelmingly a ‘Muslim problem’ and has thus resulted in the creation of a ‘new suspect community’ in the post-9/11 era (Pantazis and Pemberton 2009; Hargreaves 2014; Sunstein 2009; Hopkins and

Kahani-Hopkins 2009). Understanding British Muslims as ‘risky’ in this manner is in fact a shift from earlier assessments at different points in the UK’s history; British Muslims have replaced the Irish community of the 1950s and 1960s in this regard (Hillyard, 1993).

The CTSA effectively asks those in positions of authority to monitor their charges. We know monitoring has a significant effect on the subject (Ball 2009) and this is well covered by disciplines such as Surveillance Studies (Lyon et al. 2012). For example, previous work has investigated the surveillance of school children (McCahill & Finn 2010), employees (Ball 2010) and offenders (Nellis 2006), but what of the effects on those mandated to a national security regime? Indeed, neoliberal approaches and economy models favouring privatization, de-regulation and fiscal austerity have been readily applied to security and is evidenced through the wider spread of countering terror into the private sphere (Hoijtink 2014; Heath-Kelly et al 2015). The regulation and the role countering risk is franchised from the traditional base of responsibility (the government) to non-governmental organisations. The manner in which neoliberal values have penetrated the field of education has helped to propel contentious issues arising from this new approach (see Baltodano, 2012; Radice 2013) – for instance, unequal opportunities, an increasing audit culture, as well as the increasing educational and bureaucratic demands placed on academics (Mouontz et al. 2015). More presciently the teaching of terrorism (and one could add other ‘controversial’ subjects here) has received critical attention and been assailed by the media and/or legislators for teaching terrorism in a biased form or ‘heavy-handed’ responses to using provocative materials. Accusations have included how UK universities propagate an anti-Jewish sentiment or concerned issues such as when a university researcher was arrested and jailed for possessing a copy of an ‘Al Qaeda training manual’ (Miller et al 2011; Fitzgerald 2015; Durodie, 2016).

These instances, and others, quite possibly curtail the resources and sources that staff are comfortable using when teaching terrorism.

Universities are celebrated as places with a commitment to free speech, debate and knowledge creation. Equally, University teaching staff provide a pastoral role (from here on in we refer to teaching staff as lecturers – this includes all ranks and levels of university teachers). Being active in countering terrorism or monitoring for potential radicalisation may run counter to some of the established credentials of universities – as Theresa May seems to acknowledge with “...and yes, universities too”. Not only may it simply run counter to these credentials but in fact serve to exacerbate the problems it’s designed to prevent. As noted by Hillyard (1993) and Pantazis and Pemberton (2009), ‘hard’ governmental approaches to countering terrorism often serve to boost recruitment to terrorist organisations. For example, tactics such as ‘stop and search’ have led to about 1% of those stopped actually being arrested (Miller 2010). ‘Stop and Search’ ultimately has served to hinder relations between police and local communities and with this in mind the CTSA may offer a comparable intervention (see Independent 2016)?

Nevertheless, supporting students and ensuring their welfare is an expectation fairly placed on any university. Students do have a right to learn and grow in a safe environment. However, the CTSA identifies 22 broad ranging criteria that may indicate a student’s vulnerability to terrorism. Lecturers are expected to report on:

- Feelings of grievance and injustice
- Feeling under threat
- A need for identity, meaning and belonging
- A desire for status
- A desire for excitement and adventure
- A need to dominate and control others
- Susceptibility to indoctrination
- A desire for

political or moral change • Opportunistic involvement • Family or friends involvement in extremism • Being at a transitional time of life • Being influenced or controlled by a group • Relevant mental health issues • Over-identification with a group or ideology • Them and Us' thinking • Dehumanisation of the enemy • Attitudes that justify offending • Harmful means to an end • Harmful objectives • Individual knowledge, skills and competencies • Access to networks, funding or equipment • Criminal Capability.

(Channel 2012)

Such broad and ambiguous guidance is less than clear for those tasked with performing this new-found role. The indicators lack precision and secondary information is often required, for instance, knowing a student's family are 'extremist'. Most significantly perhaps though is that the evidence base that purports that these factors are relevant to a student's vulnerability is not apparent. Presumably these factors are premised on something other than what might feel intuitive but without knowing what informs their inclusion on this list it will always be difficult to carry out this aspect of the duty with confidence.

Within universities, the CTSA does identify the need 'to balance its legal duties in terms of both ensuring freedom of speech and academic freedom, and also protecting student welfare' (Prevent Duty Guidance 2015, 4). Despite this, the UK's leading University and College Union attest CTSA duties 'seriously threatens academic freedom and freedom of speech' (see UCU 2017). These are contradictory and tension filled statements that impact upon the academic community and produce a climate of risk aversion. This as we have discovered can include impeding open debate, because panellists at university events are deemed 'risky'; create reluctance to sanction research on certain topics; or highlight certain individuals

because of styles of dress or facial hair. In what follows, the paper progresses by firstly reviewing the theoretical context that frames our conceptual approach before presenting the empirical findings that have been taken from the interviews with university lecturers. In the final section these findings are discussed in relation to the CTSA, in particular focusing on what we consider to be the adverse impact it is having across the entire academic community.

Countering Extremism

Apparent within recent governmental initiatives have been the reactions of sovereign powers to the perceived threat of extremism and radicalisation – for example, responses to ISIS or even events such as the UK and France’s interventions in Libya (Bakker and van Zuijdewijn 2015). Notably, these sovereign displays of power have tended to be rationalised by Western actors either explicitly through the discourse of the Global War on Terror or in more recent years moving away from this rhetoric and focusing more specifically on the threat posed by groups like ISIS in the Middle East and the threat they pose across Europe and North America (Sekulow and Sekulow 2015; Schmitt 2016). Nevertheless, alongside these sovereign demonstrations we have seen the extension of a less spectacular but still very significant form of power that has rapidly become more explicit in form and more widespread in focus – namely state-led counter-terror interventions. In this way, agendas such as the CTSA succeed in co-opting a wide array of institutions and specified authorities into conducting a counter-extremism mandate. In this manner a governmental power manifests, ‘either directly through large scale campaigns, or indirectly through techniques that will make possible, without the full awareness of the people’ (Foucault, 1991, p. 100). In the example we cite, lecturers are deputised to monitor their charges for indications of extremism.

Important to contextualising our perspective here is the monitoring and social control of ‘societies of strangers’. Works embedded in such perspectives have broadened understandings of some of the changing relationships of power, individuals and institutions (see Bauman 2000; DeLanda 2006; Stenson 2010) - for instance, the systematic recordkeeping by regimes such as the Nazis’ (see Caplan 2007; 2011), or issues relating to identification, passports and the control of movements (Torpey 1997). Indeed, in Mussolini’s Italy, communist East Germany or Franco’s Spain state apparatus were used to great effect to surveil and control local populations (Dunnage 2006; Fonio 2011). It is important to recognise that organisations, institutions and governing authorities at all levels of scale rely on surveillant techniques to control risks associated with their activities (Foucaults 2001; 2007; Power 2004; Clark 2008). Simply without these bureaucratic functions modern transactions and activities of all kinds would be difficult to perform and maintain (Beck 1992). However, the widespread application of these techniques has been posited to cause a number of socially dangerous consequences which stem from its ability to discriminate between different population groups within the domains of application. The ability to ‘socially sort’ populations (Lyon 2001) into databases has real consequences for populations deemed risky (Vlcek 2007). Bureaucratic decisions can, and often do, result in varying levels of convenience, access to services, use of space and life chances (see Graham 2005; Surveillance Studies Network 2010). In addition, there is an increasing array of individuals and organizations that perform risk analysis roles – which are intended to limit harms; such as illegal movement of money, people or terrorism (Mueller & Stewart 2011). Responsibilized into these roles are ‘control workers’, who make decisions on who may or may not pose a risk (see Rose 2000). Often performed through categorization, as individuals or collections of individuals, these people are identified because they are viewed to be outside designated thresholds of acceptable risk (see Ericson and Haggerty 2007). Control workers

are those tasked with monitoring the thresholds and breeches of these thresholds; automated, algorithmic or human monitoring systems that work toward what Gandy (2012) calls ‘cumulative’ disadvantages.

Since 2001 there has been a growing prevalence of digital monitoring or reporting; for example, banks, car dealership or purveyors of high end goods must report suspicious activity (Proceeds of Crime Act 2002). A blurring of the boundaries between those under the auspiciousness of the security services and those within the private sector has enjoyed a growing maturity (see Ball et al. 2015). Moreover, a pre-emptive agenda which targets risky activities, individuals or organisations using information harvested from multifarious sources in now standard practice in the UK. Mined data is a key source in identifying and countering threats (DeGoede 2008) and has engineered a new securitisation depending on the collaboration of the private sector and governmental departments.

Personifying these developments and as has been noted by recent work on security, is the rise of a neoliberal agenda which seeks to responsabilize non-state actors to perform security roles (Goold et al 2010; Loader and Walker 2010). Driving enquiry into these developments is a need for greater understanding of the new political economies of security (White 2011; Huysmans 2011). UK governmental initiatives, such as *Prevent* (2009), *Contest* (2011) or *Request a Check* (see Home Office 2014) encourage non-traditional participation by enrolling ‘special’ actors – who are in effect deputized to perform security. The deputization is mandated through the legislation and actors, for example designated staff – i.e. a Money Laundering Reporting Officer who must report suspicious activity (see Proceeds of Crime Act 2002). The recent Data Retention and Investigatory Powers Act (2016) is another example, where internet providers must retain the previous 12 months of customers online

activity. The significance of these types of changes has been examined at state level (Adey 2012) and in relation to activities such as airline travel (Bennett 2005). Indeed, in a climate where increasingly non-security specialist organizations are implicated in national security regimes, this is an important conceptual development in the impact and enrolment of university staff – it poses questions to the political and indeed labour expectation that the strategy demands.

Adding to this movement toward organisations playing a new security role is the impact of the mandate on those repsonsiblized. It would appear the CTSA is producing a conservative effect on universities. What underscores this effect is deterrence (Penney 2016; Schauer 1978); for example, drivers are deterred from speeding because if caught they will face a fine or imprisonment. The penalty deters illegal activity. However as Schauer (1978) is careful to point out there is also a more benign element to deterrence, an inhibitory effect caused by, for example, infringing a person's will to express an opinion or act in otherwise legal contexts. Within universities, management and staff have started to take a risk-averse approach to activities deemed controversial (Gardella 2006). This we argue is a form of bureaucratic conservatism where university management limits any potential for risk and in turn then causes a ripple effect, where those subject to the conservatism, restrict expectations and behaviours. The unease felt echoes, Jackson's (2016) dilemma when recognising moments of 'self-censor'. Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) scholars may accept invitations to government events, may contribute to policy documents, because not doing so will limit opportunities to work with the state. This as Jackson argues 'legitimizes and perpetuates' the implementation of such strategies. Indeed, as researchers we are told we must be policy relevant and so by our acquiescence we may sanction counter-terror systems rather than challenge or deconstruct them. Alternatively, as Toros (2016) contends there are still benefits to be had by

sitting down with policy makers in expanding the input of the academic community. Ours is not a call to challenge governmental initiatives, but our observations serve to highlight the complicity within the academic community that may be influencing the implementation of the CTSA. With the recognition that activities are surveilled, recorded and data mined a blanket of caution influences what is understood as risky; for example, Muslim-Americans viewing certain websites post 9/11 or the use of social media (see Sidhu 2007; Marder et al. 2016).

However there may also be another important factor here and one that Scott (2013) calls ‘anarchist calisthenics’, a concept that suggests people must practice small resistances often in order to be prepared for moments when bigger issues or resistances are needed. These resistances refer to low level law breaking, for example ‘jaywalking’ or crossing the road when it is clear and importantly the red pedestrian light is showing. Such small disobediences help to erode the fear one may have to resist or make a stand against a law or a governmental position or civil order. One could possibly cite the stance once taken by Rosa Parks and its impact on civil rights in the USA. Small resistances and ‘dragging one’s feet’ as a tentative form of protest, with the potential to explode into greater forms of protest. Nevertheless, others have argued the passivity of universities toward their adoption of governmental agendas and neoliberal approaches to both education and countering terrorism (Radice 2013, Mouontz et al. 2015) aids the reach and acceptance of neoliberal policies and a continued drive for bureaucratically influenced betterment. Academics are reponsibiliized, yet the rules of engagement or how they are expected to act remain unclear and so the ambiguity surrounding the Act heightens tensions and fears – which as we argue culminate in conservatism and anxieties around doing something culpable (see Power 2004; Favarel-Garrigues et al. 2011). This coupled with, for instance, policies that suggest Muslims as

‘suspects’ and the ‘other’ has produced a politic of fear (Allen 2010; Moosavi 2013; Mythen et al. 2013 Spalek 2010). Aspects such as a ‘suspect community’ and ‘risk’ have promoted contentious stereotypes, which in turn exacerbated community tensions around feelings of suspicion and stigmatisation (Mythen and Walkate 2006). Indeed, recent CTS work acknowledges a need for greater engagement with isolated, stigmatised or ‘suspect communities’ (for example; see Marie-Breen Smyth 2007; Gunning 2007); however our focus is on a community with no security agenda that is being asked to police ‘risk’ groups (See Ericson and Haggerty 2007). Elements of the CTSA 2015 target Muslims and this may also be evident in the wider narratives of Muslims as being the new ‘folk devils’ (Awan and Zempi 2015; Abbas 2005; Alam and Husband 2013). Islamophobia as a social construct does not only form hate crime victimisation, but it can be used to target groups who are deemed to be problematic (Copsey et al. 2013; Githens-Mazer and Lambert 2013). The current literature on Islamophobia mainly concerns offline victimisation (Littler and Feldman 2015; Allen et al. 2013; Meer 2010; Taras 2012; Perry 2001). Our study, however makes the case that a new form of institutional targeting is now increasingly being adopted through state measures, that do not necessarily only impact upon Muslims. In fact, to the contrary, we argue that the CTSA 2015 public duty on Universities impacts people from all backgrounds, religious beliefs and communities who are monitored and importantly have to monitor.

Talking to Lecturers

The research contained in this paper sets out to provide an initial and exploratory study into the specific nature of University lecturers’ perceptions of their Prevent duty with the focus placed on qualitative depth rather than volume of participants. To achieve this we conducted 20 semi-structured interviews with university lecturers between April and November of 2016.

While the CTSA duty has implications in Higher Education wider than just lecturers this study deliberately chose to focus on university lecturers due to the breadth of work they carry out including teaching, supervision, research, organising and running academic events and administration.

An initial group of participants were selected purposively in the first instance to produce a small initial group that reflected the diversity we wished to achieve in our sample along disciplinary, geographical/institutional and gender lines and from here we snowballed our sample based on the insights of our participants until we arrived at 20 interviews. Our participants reflected a diverse range of positions within academia including, lecturers, senior lecturers, associate professors, readers and professors. Participants also provided a disciplinary spread and included Criminology, Computer Sciences, Law, Education, Social Science, Business and Politics. The gender make-up of participants was 13 male and 7 female. The geographical range includes participants from universities in Scotland, the Midlands, Yorkshire and London.

Given that the initial sampling technique was purposive in nature and subsequently expanded through snowballing we are not claiming that the findings in these papers can be generalised across HE or that these findings are exhaustive of different sentiments across the sector. The sample size itself is modest and reflects the exploratory nature of the study, however, the detail in which these interviews were conducted did mean that a lot of qualitatively rich verbal and written data was generated. Nevertheless, one obvious way in which a study like this could be usefully expanded would be to include a larger sample size and to include more interviews with those outside of the social sciences. A variety of different perspectives and themes were observable throughout our sample but this tended to be in relation to different degrees of scepticism. A larger and more random sample could not only draw out additional

themes and perspectives but also usefully shed light on those academics with a more positive interpretation of their duty.

The decision to stop conducting interviews at 20 was not based on prescriptive research design but instead the result of a reflective approach to data collection. As interviews were conducted and preliminary findings discussed it became apparent that a cluster of similar themes were being manifested in the perspectives we were hearing. After 20 interviews had been conducted we considered the study 'complete' insofar as new theoretical categories were not materialising. In this sense we echoed the sentiments of Milliken when she writes about establishing the point at which discourse analysis can be considered 'complete':

An analysis can be said to be complete (validated) when upon adding new texts and comparing their object spaces, the researcher finds consistently that the theoretical categories she has generated work for those texts (Milliken, 1999, p. 234).

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with a series of scripted questions that each participant was asked to ensure a certain degree of consistency between interviews but then around these questions space was granted for further discussion and elaboration. The scope of the questions goes beyond that which is reflected in this paper and set out to question the following:

- Were participants aware of the Prevent Duty and the CTSA more generally;
- Establish how the participant understood key terms in the CTSA;
- Examine participants views on the University's role in tackling extremism;
- Document participant's views on their own individual role in tackling extremism.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face, over the phone, via email and using Skype. Interviews were recorded and transcribed so that the authors could discuss the findings and conduct a thematic analysis of the transcripts. We conducted this analysis as part of the ongoing and reflective process mentioned above, where each author went through the transcripts to familiarise themselves with the entire data set before independently identifying themes and cross examining these with the findings of the other authors. After reviewing 20 interviews we decided that a number of themes were sufficiently widespread across the transcripts that we organised our findings in relation to deputisation, resistance and bureaucratic conservatism.

As part of the study we undertook ethical clearance and each interviewee was debriefed and had to fill out a consent form and participant information sheet. Participation in the study was voluntary and individuals were only interviewed or took part in the data gathering exercises after they had given their informed consent. Every effort was made to negate the possibility of anxiety or disruption.

Working with the CTSA

We theme our findings along three prominent topics. Firstly, the *deputisation* of lecturers and the tensions evident in how they understand and accept their new responsibilities. Secondly, *resistance* to the CTSA through small and mundane acts of disobedience committed by lectures. Thirdly, *bureaucratic conservatism* and risk-averse interpretations understood and experienced by universities in relation to the CTSA.

Deputisation

In our interviews participants keenly identified a pressing tension to their CTSA roles. Namely, an understanding of university as a place for development and expressions of intellectual freedom, which for many academics runs counter to the CTSA mandate to monitor for suspicious behaviour. Pressing in the views of the lecturers was how the CTSA duty serves to undermine some of the core functions of the university:

...Its [University's] primary function is about debate, conduct of research, producing and disseminating knowledge and also dissent I think is really important. Universities should be a space for speaking truth to power [...] this kind of responsibility makes that far more difficult.

(Politics, South East, Male)

As the lecturer suggests being duty-bound to act upon signs of potential radicalisation is problematic; especially if it is viewed as curtailing academic freedoms (Lukianoff 2014) and intimating the topics students may feel comfortable discussing. The following participant continues in this vein:

If I was expected to engage in significant monitoring of students it is likely that they (or at least some groups) would consider me to be a member of the state (or at least university) apparatus and be significantly more suspicious of me and cautious of what could be said.

(Sociology, Yorkshire, Male)

Identifying as being a member of the state, or indeed as a 'control worker', may run counter to how the lecturer views themselves, but it may also have the effect of limiting the

expression of a student who dresses in a certain way or has a certain viewpoint. For the following participant limiting freedoms of expressions is again of deep concern:

How can we build trust with our students when the very thing we are doing will create suspicion and mistrust? I am genuinely not sure now whether someone wearing a headscarf or if someone has a beard should warrant me contacting the relevant services. I mean that's worrying because it's not just me who thinks like this. I have had colleagues contact me and say to me is she someone who needs reporting because she wears a face veil and has said she had travelled to Turkey for a holiday.

(Social Sciences, East Midlands, Female)

These comments highlight the unease surrounding a securitization designated to maintaining the safety of the UK, and beyond (Bausch and Zeitzoff, 2015). Premised on much of the political mire of post 9/11, Iraq and now Syria, there is a deliberate and sustained focus on certain communities that have been deemed risky (Aradau and Van Munster, 2007; Heath-Kelly, 2013). The repercussion of such an approach often serve to make the targeted group feel isolated and labelled as different from host populations, with a limited effect on countering risk (see McGovern and Tobin, 2010). In this instance, religious and political identity become targeted by association and Choudhury and Fenwick (2011), attest that British Muslims and young British men in particular, feel a sense of alienation and resentment toward CTS programs and counter-terrorism legislation. In accordance with our research, participants identified Muslim students as those who would ultimately bear the brunt of the mandate disseminated from government to the university, as well as extending the idea that “[c]ounter-terrorism measures are contributing to a wider sense among Muslims

that they are being treated as a ‘suspect community’ and targeted by authorities simply because of their religion” (Choudhury and Fenwick 2011: 11; see also Hickman et al. 2011).

An institution premised on producing knowledge and speaking ‘truth to power’ that is being co-opted into a programme of state surveillance offers some conflicts of interest – particularly when particular populations are being targeted. The approach deepens tensions of suspicion and mistrust, thus reducing the ability for staff and students to engage, debate and reflect on ‘controversial’ or risky topics, a key premise to the ethos of universities to explore and foster knowledge (Kyriacou et al 2017). However equally pressing is a sense of ‘not knowing what to do’ in the face of new found requirements and the ambiguity as to how the CTSA is to be actioned:

...we didn’t have a strategy as an institution to deal with it so we were feeling around in the dark a little bit about how best to respond to the concerns that had been raised to us as academic staff and I think we probably took quite a risk averse approach...and I’m not suggesting that’s necessarily a bad thing but I think that until we see some clearer guidance or guidelines around the sort of strategy that we should be adopting as an institution I think there are potential dangers and there are potential consequences for students and their futures if we are too risk averse and how we respond to any concerns that are raised.

(Criminology, East Midlands, Male)

Despite training programs and extensive training initiatives by the Home Office none of the participants we spoke to had undergone CTS training (something we return to later in the paper). Consequently a climate of uncertainty and unease prevails in how lecturers understand the roles they are expected to perform. In addition, the potential damage to

student/lecturer relations and hindrances to freedom of expression or debate equally contribute to the discomfort expressed by participants.

Resistance

The CTSA has added to staff workloads, ones that are often already stretched and overloaded (see Mountz et al. 2015), and this too may add to the reluctance of staff when engaging with the CTSA – not only are they unsure of what to do, but they are committed to other teaching, research and administrative tasks. As one participant identifies there may be something *dangerous* about responsabilizing underprepared staff:

...Staff are just simply not qualified to do this, academic staff are not psychologists or psychiatrists their not counter-terrorist practitioners they're frequently overworked and balancing multiple responsibilities. There is something particularly dangerous I think about asking staff to become involved in these kind of matters.

(Politics, South East, Male)

Indeed, within the climate of neoliberal approaches to education the increasing pressures and labours to academia, as well as security, pursuits expose the tentative and awkward reason lecturers apply to their news found responsibilities. Ultimately this is something they feel underprepared to accomplish and secondly other more forceful pressure of the neoliberal university take precedents (Ball 2012).

However it is in these fractious moments where 'little' resistances to the responsibilities of CTSA come to the fore. For many the lecturers the demands of the CTSA is beyond their role as educators:

‘I am not going to deal with [CTSA]...I will not report something, but if I know a person is going to plant a bomb, then yes, I will call the police’

(Law, South East, Female).

Echoing the anarchist calls of Scott (2013), this lecturer is adamant they will not be reporting unless there is a clear and vibrant danger – something the auspiciousness of civil duty would motivate rather than the mandate of the CTSA. In addition antipathy to responsibilization focuses on threats to academic freedoms. The following participant elaborates:

I think people think very strongly about it, and I think, you know [University] has a reputation for being radical political place. I think it would totally undermine our sort of, core bits of our identity if we were suddenly trying to squash debate in that way.

(Politics, South East, Female)

This comment, for us, presents an interesting overview of the role now sought within universities. The department in question was once celebrated for its radical views, and this refers back to its Marxist positioning in the 1970s and 80s, which to some degree allowed it to challenge the more generalist political rhetoric of the time in the UK. The freedom to challenge and debate is viewed as a central component of the department’s identity (Royed 1996) - an identity the CTSA is clearly challenging.

Elsewhere participants expressed their CTSA duty would have a countering effect on initiating the role on lectures in securitizing universities and those enrolled in them:

The question with a general policy statement like that is how will universities translate into practice and I’m sure you’ll find that there are many different attitudes and approaches across different universities. You might get some that follow it quite

slavishly you might get some that pay lip service to it and don't really buy into the underlying ethos and you might get some that frankly don't pay any regard to it at all.

(Law, Wales, Male)

Dismissing one's CTSA responsibilities or providing the minimum of effort when performing them, we contend offers some perspective on how the resistances to it are being actualised. This is separate to the institutional responses of universities, as we will see below, but at the coal-face of where lectures meet and interact with students a principle of doing the bare minimum and not fully participating in what the CTSA demands may demonstrate the form of resistance most readily available to lectures – albeit one that has the potential to escalate into organised protest and disobedience.

Bureaucratic conservatism

For UK universities a different approach may be apparent and here we draw on what we consider to be bureaucratic conservatism in UK Universities. Focusing on the more this phenomenon one participant commented that there is a 'paranoia surrounding ongoing events within the university' (Sociology, West Midlands, Female) and that this has manifested itself in the form of proliferating paperwork, for example, external speakers must be fully vetted before attending the university. This entails completing a form with details of the speaker, the topic of the talk and where and when it will take place. The form must be approved within the department and within the faculty. As a participant explains:

We tried to organise a conference and invited a number of guest speakers. However we had to fill in all these forms and once we completed them the University rejected our application. We were never told why except that the list of speakers and event I think was too sensitive, because it was about terrorism...

(Sociology, Midlands, Male)

Terrorism is undoubtedly a sensitive subject and one with challenging and probing issues, however, as this participant felt, if the subject matter is being restricted due to its sensitivity then this is overtly effecting open debate and learning.

Different factors certainly influence how the chilling effect is ingrained within university life and most prevalent is a discomfort at having to monitor and surveil students. The following participant speaks of the unease that has been interjected into her supervisory relationship with a PhD student:

It...feels a bit awkward, for instance I have a Saudi PhD student and I always have to remind her that if she is going away, she has to notify the authorities, everything she needs to do she has got to ask permission in a way that other students don't. And I feel a bit apologetic about it and you know, a little bit like I am part of this system that doesn't trust her. It is quite minor. I certainly don't feel scared or suspicious of students I don't think.

(Education, South West, Female)

Entwined are sensations of awkwardness in performing the role assigned to the participant. To ensure compliance the student is reminded of their obligations to register where they are. The participant may be doing this with good intent – i.e. not wanting the student to get in 'trouble'. However, as the participant notes because this student is a non-EEA student they face greater scrutiny. The participant draws on trust and how the student is ultimately stigmatized due to their nationality, but more pressing here is how the participant acknowledges she is part of the system – a system she is clearly ill-at-ease with, but one she must be complicit with.

Another aspect of the PhD process is acquiring ethical clearance for research. The following participant talks about the difficulty associated with ethical approval for PhD research at their university since the CTSA duty came into effect:

Ethics reviews are more difficult doing this kind of research. But I guess it shows up the difficulties of ethical review processes, because if you are doing research on far right extremist websites that actually ethics is a constant negotiation rather than a review that happens at one point in time and then is kind of dealt with. I think it also about the relationship with the person, so the student has a history of involvement in anti-racist practice...So I guess it is about knowing the project I have and the risk of radicalisation through exposure to these spaces and I also think it is really important to have the freedom to go on these spaces and understand these space. Because how are you going to combat things like racism, it is important to understand how these ideologies are produced, how they circulate, how they are consumed

(Geography, Scotland, Male)

As the participant identifies, research (in particularly at postgraduate and post-doctoral level) is aimed at producing 'a contribution to knowledge', doing something original around a given topic. Hyper-sensitivity with regards to ethics committees as a result of the CTSA duty is not only problematic in how it could erect frustrating barriers preventing the undertaking of this sort of research but is also potentially a counter-productive symptom of university's interpretation of the duty imposed upon them (Pruzan 2016). In this instance, knowing the student, their history and the project is a clear feature in how the supervisor evaluates his participation in the project and this can be viewed in how risk is established and acted upon. The participant was also keen to suggest without a history of anti-racist practice then the student may not have been looked upon with favour.

Impacts on an Academic Community

In moving toward a conclusion we offer three points in expanding how we may begin to understand the impacts of CTSA in UK Universities.

Firstly, in thinking about deputation we borrow from Rose (2000) and Ericson and Haggerty (1997) in highlighting the role of the ‘control worker’, those with administrative authority that work to elevate risk and ensure sanctity. These workers are in the first instance the managers of universities that grant the presence of outside speakers or overview the ethical clearance of project. It is they who are the overseer of the CTSA in universities. If there is any doubt to the sensitive nature of an activity then it will face their scrutiny. This we stress refers to mundane and innocuous activities – such as student access to information, student debates, external speakers or researching particular topics deemed ‘sensitive’. What prevails is an atmosphere of suspicion and fear toward certain research topics, particular events and communities. Participants highlight a fear that universities have embraced a process of self-discipline – one designed to avoid repercussions of adverse publicity a ‘sensitive’ event may promote (see Guardian 2015). Consequently there is a conservatism in how universities manage risk and how certain freedoms are understood.

Combined with this, the lecturer is also a ‘control worker’ and this we contend is designed into the flows and events of life teaching in a university. In our institution, for instance, we are instructed to take a roll-call and record a student’s presence or absence from lectures and seminars. Our conduct is shaped by an established logic of record keeping (cf Caplan 2011). We already monitor students, we already record their absence. We categorise a student’s presence and from this we infer a student’s attitude, application or credentials. Much like the

CTSA's 22 Framework, this can be used as an indicator of risk (Deleuze 1992), in this case if absences prevail the student will be questioned or asked to leave. Policing through categorisation, as Ericsson and Haggerty (1997) suggest, structures the actions and reactions of not just the police force, but multifarious actors – such as lecturers. This is achieved with regulations and socially accepted control measures. Decisions made, not just about the individual, but circumstantial categories surrounding the individual - where do they live, employment history, drug misuse, presence on electoral role, credit history, family circumstances - frame how we manage risk. It is no coincidence that credit is secured using many of the same categories (see Burton, Knights et al. 2004; Leyshon and Thrift 1999). The Home Office eLearning Figures that started this paper alongside the 22 Framework are categories and framed responses that help 'control workers' to make decisions. Yet, as our findings suggest control workers remain confused on exactly what it is they have to do and why, and this brings us to our second point about unease and ambiguity.

Secondly, there varying degrees of resistance to the CTSA and these can take the form of university lectures 'dragging their feet' when dealing with their new found security roles. These behaviours of ignoring the less than obvious, relying on common sense or 'paying lip service' reflect low level disobedience and irritation as opposed to an outright refusal to fulfil the demands of the CTSA. Examples of more organised resistance are observable; open letters have been signed by academic experts and published in national newspapers (Guardian, 2016) and as mentioned earlier, the largest HE union has adopted an anti-Prevent stance. However, as far as we can ascertain no major protest or objection has been lodged by university staff toward the CTSA but what we suggest is the comments presented evidence how university staff are protesting in their own small ways.

Thirdly, bureaucratic conservatism is as we argue a form of compliance, UK Universities have adopted a risk-averse default position. Take for example the many Prevent Groups now established in UK Universities, tasked with implementing counter radicalisation and extremism agendas. As Quarshi (2017) considers of his experiences in one such group, academic expertise is ‘side-lined’ and there is little room for engagement with the authoritative position the CTSA Prevent demands of universities. As he suggests in citing Dick Cheney, it is not about analysis but about response to the situation. Absent is the critical voice of what the system is asking the group to do, rather the emphasis is on the practicality of ensuring the University attains the responsibilities placed upon it. Underscoring this approach lecturers feel that universities are overly cautious in their interpretations of the CTSA. This as we have suggested may be due to perceived challenges on intellectual freedoms, but also evident is animosity to the defensive approaches taken by the universities. Undoubtedly the education sector is not a homogenous entity and there is a range of responses from different institutions - not surprising given the lack of prescription handed down by the government. In fact, aspects of it have already been deemed not to apply to certain universities with Oxford and Cambridge debating societies both gaining exemption from the ban against ‘extremist speakers’ (Espinoza 2015).

Conclusion

Finally, we offer some thoughts on the CSTA and its influence on the roles of lecturers. To gain some clarity on the impact of the CTSA we submitted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to the Home Office. We asked for details on the amount of referrals made, how these referrals corresponded to the Channel assessment framework, did referrals lead to

participation in de-radicalisation programmes and completion rates of university staff on CTSA training programmes. We learnt that 29,238 Higher Education/Further Education (HE/FE) staff (this includes any post-secondary school study toward a degree or a vocational qualification) have received training. Nevertheless, our other requests were declined on the basis of Section 22 and Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act (see Appendix 1 for the FOI). In the first instance Section 22 refers to information that may be printed in the future but no further detail was supplied – i.e. possible date of publication. Section 36 refers to the fact that releasing the information may prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs and there is a lack of public interest in the disclosure. The response lacked precision and certainly did not adequately answer our questions. This may be a reflection of the ambiguity of the CTSA message.

Moreover, the amount of staff who have received training is limited, while 29,238 of all HE/FE staff may have participated in CTSA training, there are 201,380 academic staff and 208,750 non-academic staff working in UK Universities alone (Universities UK 2017). The inconsistency of training across the sector will be a contributing factor when lecturers express their lack of knowledge when tasked with identifying radical behaviours, and this lack of knowledge exists while staff are bound by CTSA mandate to monitor and report. However, this is not to say that more training represents the answer to all the issues raised here. While it *may* serve to increase lecturer's feelings of being more knowledgeable about the subject and in turn their confidence identifying the signs of radicalisation, it does not address deeper issues with the knowledge base that informs the training (Lloyd and Dean, 2015; Lloyd, 2016) that was the subject of the aforementioned open letter (Guardian, 2016). Aspects like the 22 risk factors purport to be a sort of pre-crime science but with serious concerns being raised in relation to the validity of this research the bigger problem might not that the training has not reach enough people but that it has reached them at all.

The CTSA is an expansion of state-led security into the educational sector and our goal has been to establish how lecturers understand their CTSA roles and to document their thoughts on the duty. Notwithstanding the threats posed by terrorism and the uncontroversial desire that the government has to prevent politically motivated violence against civilians, there are clearly concerns about the practical implications of making this a legal requirement to ‘inform’ on students as potential extremists. In addition, institutions face a challenge to their renown for openness, tolerance and freedom of expression. Why a style of dress can be worrisome or why the topic of debate is reportable to government agencies, all remain deeply problematic to lecturers in UK Universities. Through formally enshrining this duty in law and deputising academic staff into a programme of state surveillance the government risks breeding more suspicion between students and staff. Staff remain uncomfortable with the CTSA because they are being asked to act in a way that runs contrary to their understanding of what universities and expressions of intellectual freedoms, as well as creating an environment where staff with inadequate skills are expected to monitor and report on suspicious behaviour.

The findings in this paper concentrate on deputization, resistance and bureaucratic conservatism and these offer some semblance as to how we can begin to understand the effects of the CTSA in education. Universities must interpret the responsibility handed down to them and furthermore university staff must make their own decisions as to how they carry out their duty (if at all). The CTSA has been accused of hindering opportunities to engage in open debate, restricting research around ‘sensitive’ topics and creating a divide between staff and students. This is a counter-productive approach and one reminiscent of the heavy-handed government approaches of the past (see Hillyard 1993). Moreover, lecturer’s responsibilities have grown ever wider in terms of administration and pastoral care on top of their teaching and research. The CTSA adds more formalised expectations upon these day-to-day duties.

The argument here is not intended to highlight that lecturers are frequently spread thin across a range of diverse roles but, instead, that these extra statutory duties, a sense of ambiguity around the specifics of these duties and a questionable evidence base for them could in fact be dangerous as well as counter-productive. A void of comprehension presents a serious risk of defensive reporting as well as a disproportionate focus on suspect communities. Without adequate knowledge and skills lecturers are not equipped to conduct the work mandated upon them. More pressing, we would argue, the neoliberal approaches adopted by governments and universities toward security and education presents a troubling perspective on how profit may override all else and indeed how open and critical debate is enjoyed. We contend much more detailed work is needed on how measures such as the CTSA impact on those living and working in UK society.

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Appendix 1¹

[Fig. 3 'FOI' near here]

¹ The date on the FOI request from Home Office is incorrect and should read 04 January 2017.