

Institution: Queen Mary University of London		
Unit of Assessment: 28 History		
Title of case study: Understanding Extremism and Terrorism: Impact on Public Policy Debate		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2003-2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Martyn Frampton	Reader in Modern History	2009-present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2016-2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact		
<p>Dr Frampton's research on the history of extremism and terrorism has contributed to and informed the work of the think tank Policy Exchange. It has achieved impact on public understanding, policy debate, and government thinking on matters of significant importance to state and society. Frampton has called upon his academic scholarship to write three substantive, high-profile reports at Policy Exchange. The first, <i>Unsettled Belonging</i> (2016), produced findings based on the most extensive survey to date of British Muslim opinion. The second, <i>The New Netwar</i> (2017), made recommendations about how to combat extremist material online. The third, <i>On Islamophobia</i> (2019), presented a thorough analysis of this term and phenomenon. These reports received broad media attention and have had impact on public discussion, political debate and policy via Parliamentary select committees and ministerial statements. They have also achieved senior political commendation. In the translation of his academic research into Policy Exchange reports, Frampton has helped set the intellectual context for policy change and has also been invited into Number 10 to discuss UK policy on the Middle East and the nature of Islamism.</p>		
2. Underpinning research		
<p>Frampton is a historian of politics, terrorism, violent social movements and state responses. His research is inter-disciplinary and reaches across traditional boundaries. The early focus of his interests was upon the history, ideology and strategy of modern Irish republicanism (especially the Irish Republican Army) and the broader conflict in Northern Ireland during the latter twentieth century. This research led to three major books and numerous articles, including the first academic treatment of the dissident Irish republican movement [3.1 to 3.5].</p> <p>In his studies on Northern Ireland's history, Frampton developed expertise on the nature of political violence and extremism, the interaction between the two, and how democratic states have responded to these challenges. He sought to extend the geographical and intellectual scope of his research by applying his knowledge, understanding and research skills to another area of the modern world and its political movements. These were twentieth-century Egypt and the phenomenon of political Islam or Islamism. Specifically, Frampton's subject was the Muslim Brotherhood, the world's most influential Islamist group, and the responses of Western governments to it.</p> <p>Frampton won an AHRC major grant to study the history of the Muslim Brotherhood, learned Arabic over seven years, and carried out research in Egypt, the UK and the US. The result was a scholarly article, a book chapter and a seminal c.300,000-word monograph published by Harvard University Press [3.6 to 3.8]. Frampton's intervention focused on the Brotherhood's ideology and its view of Western imperialism and the West, and Western understanding of the Brotherhood (principally in American and British governments). He has depicted the development of an Anglo-American quasi-imperialist intellectual paradigm which has sought to situate non-state actors on a spectrum of 'moderation-extremism'.</p> <p>It was the historical understanding that Frampton developed of the history of Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, Islamism, the Middle East and relations with the West which provided him with the expert knowledge to apply aspects of his academic work to the research he was</p>		

commissioned to carry out at the Policy Exchange. Those aspects included his grasp on the broad ideological, political and social histories of Islam and the West. They also involved specific expertise on the Muslim Brotherhood's worldview, especially of the West, and on the Brotherhood's understanding of history, especially the evolution of relations between the Islamic world and the Western world over time. Furthermore, Frampton's academic research produced his detailed comprehension of Western attitudes towards the Brotherhood, and Islamism, and how to engage with both. Consequently, Frampton's knowledge of the history of socio-political movements, especially ideologically assertive Islamist movements, and the responses to them in Egypt and the West, prepared him to advise Policy Exchange on its research agendas. These pre-dated the Arab Spring but were animated by that historic event about which Frampton was very well placed to employ his historical research for impact beyond the academy. In particular, he contributed to the design and research of its project which sought to understand societal opinions of British Muslims. He then responded to Policy Exchange's interest in understanding the use of the internet by extremists. Finally, his research on the history of Islamism, and Western views of it, qualified him to advise Policy Exchange on Islamophobia and co-author a report on it as a phenomenon [3.6-3.8].

3. References to the research

- [3.1] Frampton, M. (2009). *Long March: The Political Strategy of Sinn Féin, 1981-2007*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- [3.2] Frampton, M. (2009). *Talking to Terrorists: Making Peace in Northern Ireland and the Basque Country*. Hurst&Co.
- [3.3] Frampton, M. (2010). *Legion of the Rearguard: Dissident Irish Republicanism*. Irish Academic Press.
- [3.4] Frampton, M. (2005). Sinn Féin and the European Arena: 'Ourselves Alone' or 'Critical Engagement'? *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 235-253. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30001944>
- [3.5] Frampton, M. (2004). 'Squaring the circle': the foreign policy of Sinn Féin, 1983–1989. *Irish Political Studies*, 19(2), 43-63. doi.org/10.1080/0790718042000311006
- [3.6] Frampton, M., & Rosen, E. (2013). Reading the runes? The United States and the Muslim brotherhood as seen through the Wikileaks cables. *The Historical Journal*, 827-856. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24529096>
- [3.7] Frampton, M., & Maher, S. (2013). Between 'Engagement' and a 'Values-Led' Approach: Britain and the Muslim Brotherhood from 9/11 to the Arab Spring. *The West and the Muslim Brotherhood after the Arab Spring*, 32-55.
- [3.8] Frampton, M. (2018). *The Muslim Brotherhood and the West: A History between Enmity and Engagement*. Harvard University Press pp.

Evidence of the quality of research

[EQR.3.6,3.7] Frampton, M. [PI]. (2013-15). Britain, the United States and the Muslim Brotherhood: Where 'east' meets 'west' [AH/L002493/1]. AHRC. GBP121,826.

4. Details of the impact

Frampton's scholarly research expertise has had impact upon public understanding, policy debates and Parliamentary and government attitudes on issues of contemporary significance to state and society. Those include the views of Muslim communities in modern Britain, the evolution of Islamist extremism, as well as the concept of Islamophobia. Frampton was commissioned by the think tank Policy Exchange to develop and lead its programme on Security and Extremism which concentrates on the challenges posed by violent and non-violent forms of radicalism and seeks to influence public knowledge and policy on counter-extremism and counter-terrorism. Policy Exchange observed that 'Frampton has been able to draw on his academic expertise when contributing to our more directly policy-focused work [...] [he] has played a vital role in leading the work of one of Policy Exchange's most high profile, active and influential research units. His fluency in multiple areas of research is highly distinctive and it is for this reason that we have worked so closely with him – and would hope to continue doing so in the future' [5.1]. Frampton has directed three prominent Policy

Exchange projects and has been principal author of the reports that were produced by them. The first had impact on public debate and understanding, and the second and third on Parliament and counter-extremist and counter-terrorist stakeholders, including the British government.

Understanding Muslim public opinion: Unsettled Belonging

In 2016, Frampton collaborated with ICM to conduct the largest commissioned survey of British Muslim opinion. The purpose of this survey was to have impact upon public understanding by the production of an academically-informed research report which would receive wide coverage in the British media. Over nine months, Frampton supervised the production of a 36-question survey, which was put to over 3,000 individuals of Muslim background (most surveys of this kind target maximum 1000 respondents) in localities across the country where Muslims account for over 20% of the population thus balanced feasibility with comprehensiveness. Additionally, ten multi-participant focus groups were held in different locations to discuss issues arising from initial results. This produced an extremely rich, publicly-available dataset, formed by the results from over 3,000 in-depth interviews, comprising over 1500 pages of raw data, allied to transcripts and notes from the focus groups. The data became the basis of *Unsettled Belonging: A Survey of Britain's Muslim communities*, a 30,000-word report published in December 2016 [5.2].

This report sought to convey the complex nature of British Muslim opinion, noting inter alia the essentially 'secular' priorities and interests of the vast majority of British Muslims as well as their strong commitment to their British identity. It also recognised that British Muslims were more socially conservative than the UK population as a whole on a number of key issues. The report found additionally that British Muslims had a higher propensity to accept prominent conspiracy theories than the wider UK population (e.g. that the 9/11 terrorist attacks were 'an inside job'). The complex, cross-cutting findings of the report prompted much media attention. For instance, its authors appeared on the BBC's Today programme, as well as ITV's Good Morning Britain (1,160,000 viewers) and Sky News (8,000,000 viewers) and it was also front page in *The Times* ('British Muslims were more likely than the general population to condemn terrorism, the survey by ICM and Policy Exchange... found' circulation: 359,960) and *The Guardian* ('Britain's Muslim communities have 'separatist' tendencies and a 'deeply worrying' belief in conspiracy theories, according to one of the government's favourite centre-right think-tanks print readership: 3,600,000; circulation: 111,953). The Report also received substantial coverage in *The Daily Mail* (print readership: 2,200,000; circulation: 990,106), *The Sun* (circulation 1,210,915) and the *Metro* (circulation 767,421) [5.3].

Tackling extremism online: The New Netwar

In 2017, Frampton continued his collaboration with Policy Exchange, leading and co-authoring another major project, *The New Netwar: Countering Extremism Online* (2017). Its purpose was to have impact upon policy debate, Parliamentary opinion and government policy about an increasingly significant issue for public policy and society. The project's 50,000-word report offered a comprehensive examination of the challenge posed by online extremism particularly as propagated by ISIS, as it transitioned in 2017 from 'real world' Caliphate to virtual radicaliser [5.4]. The report included the results from online polling of over 2000 adults, prepared and carried out in conjunction with ICM, which provided new insights into public attitudes towards online extremism. Praised in its foreword by US General David Petraeus as 'valuable ... very timely and very useful', the report proposed policy recommendations about how governments should respond to the danger of online radicalisation [5.4]. Most significant were the introduction of tougher sentences and possibly new legal measures to punish those who produce and consume extremist content, and the application of more political pressure to social media companies to do more to tackle this problem, with a view to establishing a new regulatory regime.

The report had impact upon senior politicians and policy-makers including the UK Home Secretary, Amber Rudd ('We know that Daesh pose a threat online and this report helps to highlight the scale of the issue' [5.5]) and the Chair of the House of Commons Home Affairs

Select Committee, Yvette Cooper [5.6]. The former Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, David Anderson Q.C., publicly endorsed the report's findings [5.7], and key recommendations were taken up by the government and became a part of mainstream debate (such as suggestions for how the leading social media companies might do more to tackle online extremism and calls for people who repeatedly view terrorist content online to face tougher criminal sentences). Just a few weeks after the report, the Home Secretary announced that the government would enact the latter change and tougher new sentencing guidelines came into effect in 2018. Former Prime Minister Theresa May spoke on several of these issues in a way that was entirely consistent with the report [5.5].

Policy Exchange also met privately with representatives from key stakeholders from policing, national security, the judicial system and media regulators to discuss the findings of its research. In February 2018, Frampton was invited to give evidence to the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee (HASC), as part of its inquiry into hate crime and online extremism [5.6]. The HASC has made it clear that it sees online crime as no less important than that which occurs offline, and the Committee heard with interest Frampton's ideas about how further pressure might be applied to the major social media companies to do more to prevent the dissemination of extremist/hateful material. HASC's inquiry into Hate Crime and its consequences is ongoing, but it has consistently echoed the call for tougher action on the social media companies.

On release, the New Netwar generated major media impact both within the UK and internationally. It featured on the BBC's Today programme, ITV's Good Morning Britain, Sky News, BBC's Daily Politics, BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC Radio World Service, and LBC Talk Radio. It also received broad newspaper and magazine coverage in the UK (*The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph*, *The Sun*, *The Mirror*, *the Evening Standard*), in the United States (*The Washington Post* (circulation: 578,482,000), *Newsweek* (circulation: 48,733) and elsewhere (the *National*, the *Herald Sun* (circulation 25,050), Xinhua, *Gulf News* (circulation: 117,000), *Arab News*, *The Times of India* (circulation 2,274,332)) [5.5].

Debating the Meaning of 'Islamophobia': On Islamophobia

In 2019, Frampton's most recent collaboration with Policy Exchange has been a 50,000-word report *On Islamophobia: The Problem of Definition*. Co-authored with Sir John Jenkins and Trevor Phillips OBE, this report examined the concept of Islamophobia and the debate about it in UK politics and society [5.8]. It aimed to impact public understanding, including Parliamentary opinion, of the supposed pervasiveness of anti-Muslim hatred and prejudice in the UK. Frampton's research explained how Islamist groups have employed the term 'Islamophobia' to further their own partisan agendas. The result has been to make criticism of 'Islamist extremism' more difficult. Not only does this factor serve to empower far right narratives that conflate Islam and Islamism, but more broadly it complicates the task of building a cohesive, and shared multicultural society. The report also produced policy recommendations which urged the UK government to adopt a holistic approach to tackling discrimination and disadvantage, and to be bold in combatting anti-Muslim prejudice. These recommendations further suggested that the government should not adopt the All-Party Parliamentary Group's call for a definition of Islamophobia on the grounds that inchoate conceptions of this term, though well-meaning, conflate race and religion and undermine existing equalities legislation. *On Islamophobia* enlivened public debate in the UK. Some opinion was negative. In Parliament, Dominic Grieve MP challenged the report's conclusions and Baroness Warsi, a supporter of the APPG's proposed definition of Islamophobia, criticised the report, as did the Muslim Council of Britain. Conversely, Khalid Mahmood MP, who had written a foreword for the report, defended it. Significantly, the announcement in May 2019 by the Communities Secretary, James Brokenshire that the government would not adopt the APPG definition indicated the government's convergence with *On Islamophobia*.

High-level commendation and policy advice

Frampton has continued his collaboration with Policy Exchange as its Head of the Security and Extremism programme. Its importance and effect upon policy debates has been noted by

senior politicians publicly. In 2018, the former UK Prime Minister David Cameron commended the think tank's work on Islamist extremism at a conference held in Washington D.C., and the then current Home Secretary, Sajid Javid (whose department shares responsibility for counter-extremism policy) also praised its 'hugely important' contributions [5.10 and 5.11]. The ongoing impact of Frampton's scholarship and activities at Policy Exchange upon UK government thinking is apparent. In March 2020 he accepted an invitation to brief the Prime Minister's Foreign Policy Adviser in Number 10 Downing Street on UK policy towards the Middle East as part of the new government's review of foreign policy. The 60-minute meeting saw discussion of UK foreign policy in the Middle East and the nature of Islamism. [5.12].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- [5.1] [Testimonial] Policy Exchange, 28 January 2020 [Corroborator 1]
- [5.2] [Report] Unsettled Belonging: A Survey of Britain's Muslim Communities (Policy Exchange, 2016), available at, https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/PEXJ5037_Muslim_Communities_FINAL.pdf
- [5.3] [Press] Policy Exchange Report, Unsettled Belonging: A Survey of Britain's Muslim Communities (2016)
- [5.4] [Report] The New Netwar: Countering Extremism Online (Policy Exchange, 2017), available at, <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/The-New-Netwar-1.pdf>
- [5.5] [Press] Policy Exchange Report, The New Netwar: Countering Extremism Online (2017)
- [5.6] [Testimonial] Dr Martyn Frampton gives evidence to Home Affairs Committee on hate crimes', Policy Exchange, 6 February 2018, <https://policyexchange.org.uk/news/dr-martyn-frampton-gives-evidence-to-home-affairs-committee-on-hate-crimes/>
- [5.7] [Testimonial] Anderson made the comments during a public debate held at the Conservative Party conference of 2017. He said: 'I can recommend this Policy Exchange report 'The New Netwar', which explains using the word 'swarmcast', just how ingenious these people are...'
- [5.8] [Report] On Islamophobia: The Problem of Definition (Policy Exchange, 2019), available at, <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/On-Islamophobia.pdf>
- [5.9] [Press] Policy Exchange Report On Islamophobia: The Problem of Definition (2019)
- [5.10] [Press] P. Goodman, 'As May squares up to one security challenge, Cameron reminds us of another: Islamist extremism – and its wider dimensions', Conservative Home, 16 March 2018, <https://www.conservativehome.com/thetorydiary/2018/03/as-may-squares-up-to-a-security-challenge-cameron-reminds-us-of-another-islamist-extremism-and-its-wider-dimension.html>
- [5.11] [Press] 'Sajid Javid praises Policy Exchange's 'hugely important' work', Policy Exchange, 5 October 2018, <https://policyexchange.org.uk/news/sajid-javid-praises-policy-exchanges-hugely-important-work/>
- [5.12] [Testimonial] Foreign Policy Adviser to the Prime Minister, 29 January 2020 [Corroborator 2]