

Countering Terrorism

Ms. Bridget Matty is a regional representative for the national countering terrorism center (NCTC). The NCTC is a department that fuses national intelligence in order to ensure national security without the division of intelligence throughout governmental departments. Through the department she represents, we are able to evaluate the science of terrorist organizations and their territories, and make educated decisions in times of crisis. I am a Peace and Justice Studies emphasis, so National Security Studies is a new and exuberant environment. I gained a new insight for international terrorism in the world around me, and how quickly it can change in just a few years. The territorial fluctuation has little correlation to how influential terrorist propaganda is to those who have the basic ethics and values of a group, to quickly become an extremist.

I was shocked to hear for myself the news about the 17-year-old boy in southern Utah, who defaced the American flag and replaced it with that of the extremist group ISIS. He was then later caught with a weapon of mass destruction and faces felony charges as a minor through the Serious Young Offender Act. Matty also gave the accounted for number of Americans who have tried to join ISIS, which approximates to about 300 and of those, only 12 have returned. After ISIS's peak in 2014, territorially and domestically, they have exponentially declined in influence and have taken responsibility for attacks that have had no affiliation. For example; the Las Vegas shooting by Steven Paddock had no affiliation with the ISIS organization, and yet they have claimed responsibility. Which goes as far as to show how desperate they are in terms of bringing themselves into the light of an ongoing global threat. The countering terrorism presentation gave me a broader perspective of how national security ties into public administration, popularly through organizations such as; the FBI, CIA, NCTC, NSA, DIA, etc.

Through the presentation, I have a better understanding of the Human Geography behind terrorism, and how they can influence International Relations, and not only in places of occupancy.

Kyle Williams, UVU student