WESTERN JIHADISM LAB RECEIVES MAJOR NIJ GRANT

Global violence perpetuated by terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda and ISIL has created an atmosphere of uncertainty for international law enforcement agencies seeking to counter radicalization. Resource constraints limit government agencies seeking to pinpoint and monitor radicalized individuals considered to be at risk of committing acts of violence. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) whose work focuses on de-radicalization similarly run into challenges in ascertaining who may or may not be a risk.

Professor Jytte Klausen’s Western Jihadism Project, in conjunction with the Computer Networking Research Lab at Colorado State University, recently received a grant from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to offer risk assessments to law enforcement agencies and NGOs working to counter violent extremism. This grant represents a significant step forward for the Western Jihadism Project at Brandeis.

Professor Jytte Klausen, the Lawrence A. Wien Professor of International Cooperation at Brandeis University, launched the Project in 2006, creating a vast multimedia data collection effort tracking the growth of jihadism in Western Europe, North America, and Australia since the early 1990s. A recipient of several federal grants, Klausen developed empirical protocols that effectively pinpoint levels of radicalization among individuals recruited by radical jihadist organizations. This new NIJ grant will fund and expand the number of indicators linked to radicalization related to cases ranging from 2015 to 2016. More importantly, NIJ funds will help realize the creation of a tool that can wade through large databases and pinpoint individuals meeting the established criteria.

The Project’s collection is made available by request to qualified researchers.