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What Can State Talk Tell Us About Punitiveness? A Comparison of Responses to Political Mass Shootings in The United States and Norway

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WHAT CAN STATE TALK TELL US ABOUT PUNITIVENESS?

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES TO POLITICAL MASS SHOOTINGS IN THE UNITED

STATES AND NORWAY

by

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ABSTRACT

WHAT CAN STATE TALK TELL US ABOUT PUNITIVENESS? A COMPARISON OF
RESPONSES TO POLITICAL MASS SHOOTINGS IN THE UNITED STATES AND
NORWAY

Kimberlee G. Waggoner
Old Dominion University, 2016
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Highlighting the culturally contingent nature of state reactions to crime, the present work focuses on state talk issued by the U.S. and Norwegian governments in the aftermath of politically motivated mass shootings. The research is guided by the question: how does state talk—conditioned by economic, political, and cultural forces—facilitate or constrain punitive responses to political mass shootings? Here, the focus is on the January 8th 2011 shooting of U.S. representative Gabrielle Giffords and her constituents and the July 22nd 2011 bombing of a government building and shooting of a youth political camp in Norway. These two cases illustrate how state talk can either help to escalate or moderate responses to horrific events.

Situating state discourse in the context of American exceptionalism in the case of the United States and Scandinavian Exceptionalism in the case of Norway, the present study argues that state talk reflects and reinforces both the United States notably precarious and competitive social order and Norway's comparatively less volatile and more cooperative social order. Analysis of both more and less incendiary government talk and the cultural factors that uphold the tone and content of such state talk is needed to better understand the role of government rhetoric in shaping responses to tragedy.

The present work, relying on qualitative content analysis, examines government press releases, speech transcripts, and op-eds posted to government websites. Here, themes thought to

constrain or facilitate punitive responses, derived from criminological literature, were applied to the state talk data. This approach reveals the divergent ways in which states talk about tragedy across cultures. I then link divergent state talk findings to politics and social life after January 8th and July 22nd to paint a picture of the dissimilar effects of state talk. In conclusion, I discuss policy considerations in light of these findings and future avenues of research.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Scripture tells us that there is evil in the world, and that terrible things happen for reasons that defy human understanding... For the truth is none of us can know exactly what triggered this vicious attack. None of us can know with any certainty what might have stopped those shots from being fired, or what thoughts lurked in the inner recesses of a violent man's mind…May God bless and keep those we've lost in restful and eternal peace. May He love and watch over the survivors. And may He bless the United States of America (White House 2011a).

The nation came together and responded with dignity, in a demonstration of confidence in our open democracy and our society's ability to deal with this ordeal…Work is being done to counter radicalisation and violence in a number of different arenas: in an inclusive school system, in dialogue between religions in an atmosphere of mutual trust, and in tireless efforts to prevent the marginalisation of individuals in society (Office of the Prime Minister 2012c).

Contrast the above statements. American President Barack Obama focuses on the unpredictability of evil and the difficulty inherent in preventing violence, invoking religious imagery. In contrast, Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg stresses the importance of social support, open democracy, strong social institutions, dialogue, trust, and the prevention of marginalization as a way to prevent violence. These two statements powerfully illustrate differences between how the United States and Norway talk about mass shootings. As has become evident over the course of this research, the way in which people talk about crime, particularly leaders, matters in real, concrete ways. The content and tone of this state talk both reflects underlying cultural, economic, and political realties as well as influences policy and practice. Political leaders shape how we think about crime and our views on how we ought to prevent and respond to it.

ORIGINS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study was inspired by a semester studying abroad as an undergraduate at the University of Oslo. While in Norway in 2008, I encountered a new way of doing social and crime policy that has profoundly impacted both my work and my understanding of the world. Reading about the Scandinavian welfare state and so-called Scandinavian exceptionalism is one thing, but immersing yourself in it is quite another. My time in Norway inspired me to think about alternative responses to social problems, including crime, at home here in America.

In some ways, this project began fermenting in my mind shortly before I moved across the United States from Arizona to Virginia to begin my PhD in 2011. While watching reports of a dual bombing-shooting in Oslo July 22nd in horror, I was struck by how surreally different the media and government spoke about the tragedy. This, in contrast to the bitter finger pointing that seems to erupt after each of America's periodic mass shootings, got me thinking. How was it that Norwegian officials were able to even consider, let alone get away with, focusing on trusting one another, working together, and not being bullied into fear- based responses? As I made my way through years' worth of class readings and discussions, it became increasingly obvious that certain factors might underlie the ways in which people talk about crime across cultures. Hopefully, through the application of themes derived from the criminological literature to state talk, I can help to make sense of the etiology and consequences of state talk.

THE CASES

On January 8th 2011, twenty-two-year-old Jared Loughner shot and killed six people and wounded another thirteen at a neighborhood political event in Tucson, Arizona. Several months later, on the other side of the world on July 22, 2011 in Oslo, Norway, Anders Behring Breivik killed 8 people and injured 200 more in a car bombing near a government building in Oslo. This

act of horrific violence was followed by the shooting of 69 people, most of them children, at a political youth camp. Both shootings, aimed at political targets, were committed by white, male, gunmen with American and Norwegian citizenship status respectively. Reactions by state officials differed in both cases as did the response of the international community. In the aftermath of the Loughner attacks, Arizona was dubbed the capital of intolerance (Altheide and Johnson 2011). In contrast, Norway was widely praised for their more moderate reaction following the attacks perpetrated by Breivik with some commentators holding Norway up as an exemplar for how to respond to acts of such profound horror (Spaaij 2012, Pratt and Eriksson 2013).

WHY STATE TALK MATTERS

One way to better understand different reactions to cases of high profile violence is to examine what agents of the state have to say about them. State talk refers to verbal, written, and symbolic communications produced and disseminated by state actors. Analysis of political discourse provides a way to study the social construction of key events such as the 2011 Tucson, Arizona shootings and 2011 attacks in Oslo, Norway (Mythen and Walklate 2006, Bonn 2011). State talk not only provides a window into how the government hopes to portray itself, it also aspires to set the tone for media discourse and public opinion (Hawdon 2001, Roberts and Hough 2002, Socia and Brown 2014). Ultimately, the state reminds us how to respond to tragedy.

Speaking about the relationship between political rhetoric and democracy, Boser and Lake (2014: 623) assert that "…toxicity is not merely a matter of tone, or of metaphor. Civility also has substance: civil rhetoric matters because, and insofar as, it enables democratic life." This sentiment illustrates the importance of rhetorical analysis. Scholarship, largely focused on Anglo-Saxon countries, tends to emphasize toxic political discourse. To broaden our

understanding of how states talk about crime, we also need to consider more civil rhetoric such as that found in countries like Norway– and explore how this discourse flows from and upholds a more egalitarian social order.

The present work examines state talk surrounding these two political mass shooting cases. Here, documents published online by state representatives in Norway and the United States are analyzed. These documents include data sources such as speech transcripts, op-eds, and press releases. As previous research has illustrated, the tone and content of what agents of the state say matters and is shaped by the cultural context in which it is embedded (Green 2009, Waggoner 2015).

High profile homicides, such as the politically motivated mass shootings analyzed in the present study, constitute "…one of the places where social commentaries on crime meet individual crime events to the most telling effect concerning how society both expresses disapproval and withholds disapproval for its worst crimes" (Peelo and Shoothill 2011: 244). This sentiment speaks to the variation underlying the ways in which societies talk about crime– and differences in their social structure and cultural histories.

The cases here have been coded for factors identified in the literature that might either constrain or facilitate punitive responses. The rhetoric espoused by Norway's political leadership, symbolically remarkable in its call for more openness and democracy, differs dramatically from that of American leaders facing tragedy. Green (2009:518), illustrating the importance of what we hear about crime, reminds us that "…our views, impressions and evaluations of crime and what should be done about it feed on and are sustained by congenial cultural resources, images and narratives." Closer examination of the factors that make these differences possible is needed to better understand why state talk is the way that it is in a given

society as well as ways to talk about crime less punitively. To accomplish this goal, I focus on (1) describing the content of state talk, (2) linking the content of state talk to the socio-economic and political context in which it is embedded, (3) exploring the social and political ramifications of politically motivated mass shootings such as those on January 8th and July 22nd and (4) discussing policy considerations and future directions for study.

THE ARGUMENT

The present case studies highlight the culturally contingent nature of state responses to crime and the need to pay particular attention to the ways in which societies are organized in order to explain these differences. While this context shapes the tone of reactions, the talk itself is also important in that it helps to reinforce and reproduce the existing social order. The contrasts between American and Norwegian state talk shed light on how the tone and content of messages disseminated by political leaders in the aftermath of high profile tragedy impact responses to these kinds of events.

The ways in which each country has reacted in terms of policy and commemoration also merit attention. In the American case, state talk as well as policy reflect and reinforce a neoliberal, highly individualistic, and punitive culture. In contrast, the discourse disseminated by leaders in the Norwegian case, as well as policies that have followed, fits with the ongoing Scandinavian Exceptionalism debate in criminology emphasizing a comparatively humane approach to crime control. The language used by Norwegian government officials draws upon core societal values such as trust in the government, social solidarity, and overcoming fear. Strikingly, both the United States and Norway have worked to remember those lost in very similar ways.

Comparative research has gained increasing prominence in criminology in recent years moving from a peripheral sub-field to a prominent area of study (Karstedt 2011, Cavadino and Dignan 2006). Brodeur (2007) observes that increased interest in comparative work is not just academic, as international bodies such as the United Nations and Council of Europe as well as national governments are also promoting comparison. Such comparative work is desperately needed to better understand the roots of cross-national differences in violent crime and the ways in which we react to it (Currie 2015, Snacken 2015).

The present study, in line with the need to better understand the contours of crime and justice across societies, relies on comparative case studies to highlight the culturally contingent nature of state reactions to crime, particularly triggering events—events which capture both national and international attention for an extended period of time. While much of this literature on the social construction of crime focuses on the incendiary nature of dominant discourses, particularly in the United States, the Norwegian case provides a window into how states construct more measured accounts of tragic crime events. State discourse surrounding the Breivik case, drawing on core values, reflects and reinforces Norway's comparatively less volatile and competitive social order. The question of how more equal societies justify and uphold a more egalitarian social order –even in the face of horrific events– is an important issue for criminologists given a line of scholarship focused on the punitive turn (Garland 2001, Simon 2007, Wacquant 2010).

It is my hope that the present project, in examining political discourse across two cultures, will help to broaden our understanding of divergent responses to crime across socio-political economic contexts. Such comparative work is important for criminology because it

illuminates the factors underlying responses to crime in ways that may help us to consider alternative ways of talking about and ultimately responding to crime.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The question underlying the present project asks us to consider: how does state talk—conditioned by economic, political, and cultural forces—facilitate or constrain punitive responses to political mass shootings? Scholarship has established that such conditions differ radically between Anglo-Saxon countries such as the United States and Nordic countries such as Norway (Pratt and Eriksson 2013, Green 2009). Societies where leaders speak more moderately about crime, and which typically having less crime and milder punishment, are illustrative for their less moderate counterparts.

Notably, the United States prioritizes a highly individualistic and competitive neoliberal economic order. In contrast, Norway has dedicated more resources to establishing and maintaining a relatively strong social welfare state, which serves as a buffer against the volatile global economy. The present study seeks to better understand why the American response to the Jared Laughner case was more divisive and punitive than the Norwegian response to the Anders Breivik case.

OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter I served as an introduction to the premise of the present project, research questions, and an overview of the dissertation. Chapter II reviews the extant literature on the differences underlying American and Norwegian socio-economic conditions, political systems, social trust and solidarity, fear of crime, and penal sensibilities to set the stage for an analysis of state talk across the two present cases. Chapter III details the methods and data used for the project outlining qualitative content analysis and the government data motoring the analysis.

Chapter IV, findings, begins with an overview of the January 8th and July 22nd attacks in the United States and Norway. After setting the stage, I cover the main themes identified in the documents analyzed for the present study, focusing on possible constraints (trust in the government, social solidarity, and refusal to succumb to fear) and facilitators (distrust in the government, social division, and fear) of punitiveness derived from criminological works to connect literature to real world data. Chapter V serves as an analysis of state talk surrounding crime, in this case political mass shooting, by drawing upon work in the areas of American and Scandinavian exceptionalism to highlight and contextualize different ways of talking about tragedy. Chapter VI examines the real world impact of January 8th and July 22nd in the United States and Norway by looking at the social and political ramifications of politically motivated mass shootings and the way in which agents of the state frame events of this nature. Chapter VII concludes with a summary of the present work, policy implications, and discusses future directions for research with the hope that a better understanding of the larger social forces shaping responses to crime can lead us towards kinder, more productive ways of governing.

CHAPTER 2

MAKING SENSE OF DIFFERENCE: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

All in all this was a pretty shameful day for Washington (White House 2013a).

We know that if young people can get an education and find work, if they feel that they have a future in society, this creates inclusion – and a good environment for all of us (Office of the Prime Minister 2015a).

The way in which leaders discuss tragedy provides insight into society more broadly, revealing how things are or at the very least how leaders want them to be. President Barack Obama's statement regarding the failure of the Senate to pass legislation to extend background checks for gun sales, short and simple as it is, reveals a great frustration with a deeply divided bi-partisan political system teeming with special interest group money. In contrast, Prime Minister Erna Solberg the leader of a multi-party coalition, assures European youth who have gathered in Oslo for a countering violent extremism conference that strong social supports are a key strategy for both preventing extremist violence and improving life more generally. This approach, centered on maintaining a strong welfare state, popular to some degree across Norway's multiple political parties, stands in stark contrast to America's battle over guns in the quest to prevent violent extremism.

INTRODUCTION

Comparative scholars have explored various areas of difference underlying varying reactions to crime across nations. The key to better understanding these differences is understanding the way in which societies are organized. What we know about how societies respond to crime is heavily influenced by work in highly punitive, competitive, and neoliberal Anglo-Saxon countries, particularly the United States (Garland 2001, Simon 2007, Waquant

2009). This line of work assumes a degree of penal convergence emphasizing similarities between countries (Snacken and Dumortier 2012, Pratt et al. 2005, Tonry 2004). Another line of criminological literature focuses primarily on differences between societies looking at socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts (Cavadino and Dignan 2006, Lacey 2008). This latter line of theorizing helps to turn our attention to both risk and protective factors (Snacken and Dumortier 2012). Although there is much to learn from work unpacking punitiveness in neoliberal societies, in line with Green (2008), I believe that there is a great need to look at more subdued responses to crime in societies such as Norway.

Speaking in broad strokes, Pratt and Eriksson (2013) argue that four main areas undergird explanations for differences between Anglo-Saxon and Nordic regimes in the realm of crime and justice: the welfare state, political-economy, political climate, and mass media. Bearing this in mind, I begin with an overview of the literature on punitiveness being mindful of debates surrounding its definition and measurement. I follow with an overview of the welfare state and political economy in the United States and Norway to establish the context in which state talk surrounding political mass shootings occurs in each country. Next, I provide a discussion of the political cultures to contextualize state talk. I then review the literature regarding the basis of the constraints and facilitator variables used in the present project: interpersonal trust and social solidarity, trust in the government and social institutions, and fear of crime. To conclude, I discuss long-standing differences in penal sensibilities between the two countries. These areas of difference, underlying state talk, help to both reflect and reproduce the existing social order in the cultures in which they are embedded.

CRIME AND JUSTICE IN THE UNITED STATES AND NORWAY

Anglo-Saxon countries such as the United States and Scandinavian countries such as Norway differ markedly in both violence and punishment. Such differences are detailed and grappled with in a burgeoning literature seeking to better understand why societies respond to crime differently. Comparative work analyzing the state of crime and justice in Anglo-Saxon and Nordic countries nicely illustrates divergent ways of coping with social problems such as crime (See Green 2009, and Pratt and Eriksson 2013).

Looking at data compiled by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD 2014a), 1.5% of American's reported being assaulted over the previous 12 months, less than the average of 3.9% of OECD member countries. In comparative perspective, the United States ranks 4th out of 36 countries. While the United States boasts one of the lowest reported assault rates, homicide is another story (Currie 2015). Per 100,000 people, there are 5.2 homicides. This puts the United States in 33rd place among 36 countries. Only the Russian Federation (12.8 homicides), Mexico (23.4 homicides), and Brazil (25.5 homicides) top the United States in the realm of murder (OECD 2014a). Lethal violence in the United States is so common place and entrenched that it is viewed as a normal and ultimately inevitable part of daily life in many communities (Currie 2015).

The picture in Norway is a bit different. According to OECD (2014a) data, 3.3% of Norwegians reported having been assaulted in the previous year, slightly less than the average of 3.9% among OECD member countries. Out of 36 countries, this puts Norway at number 14. Looking at the homicide rates per 100,000 inhabitants, the OECD (2014a) estimates a rate of .06. This is considerably lower than the OECD average of 4.0 per 100,000. Here, Norway ranks 11th out of 36 countries (OECD 2014a). These trends comport with Zimring and Gordon (1998) and

Currie (2015) who argue that non-lethal violence tends to be relatively similar among industrialized countries, while homicide rates tend to be considerably lower everywhere except the United States.

Looking at the differences in violent crime between the United States and Norway raises an interesting question, namely, what do we make of Norway's higher self-reported rates of assault in the OECD data? One possibility is that Norwegians and Americans define violence differently. In this case, it may be that Norwegians have a lower threshold for violence than their American counterparts resulting in a greater likelihood of answering in the affirmative when asked if they had been assaulted in the previous year. One illustration of this possibility is that of spanking. In Norway and many other countries, spanking is illegal. In contrast, parents and sometimes even educators, are able and sometimes encouraged to spank their children in the United States (Currie 2015). Another possibility is that physical altercations in Norway are less likely to result in death than they are in the United States where a greater number of people are armed with lethal weapons, specifically firearms. For reasons such as these, when doing comparative work, criminologists usually prefer to work with homicide data as it is arguably the most accurate and complete indicator of crime available to us (Zimring and Hawkins 1998, Currie 2015).

The United States is exceptional having distinguished itself as a leader in punishment, both in quantity and quality. Indeed, it is a world leader in incarceration, second only to Seychelles out of the 222 jurisdictions included in the World Prison Brief compiled by the Institute for Criminal Policy Research (ICPRa). The United States boasts an incarceration rate of 698 per 100,000 persons. This translates to an estimated 2,217,000 people behind bars in the United States (ICPRb).

In the realm of criminal justice, punishment in Norway has been characterized by comparatively low rates of imprisonment, relatively short prison sentences, facilities aimed at humane treatment, and an emphasis on fines and community service as common alternatives to incarceration (Tonry 2007). Norway, ranking 175 out of 220 countries, has an incarceration rate of 71 per 100,000 persons (ICPRa). In total, an estimated 3,720 persons are behind bars in Norway (ICPRc). The situation in Norway stands in stark contrast to the situation in the United States.

Comparative criminology challenges the all too common notion in the United States that violence and harsh, widespread punishment are natural and inevitable. Data from nearly every other industrial nation, particularly from Nordic countries such as Norway, illustrate that kinder, gentler societies are possible. What is more, comparative work sheds light on the cultural values, social structures, and policies that enable these societies, thus providing clues as to how people's lives –and crime policy– can be improved elsewhere (Currie 2015).

PUNITIVENESS: A COMPLEX AND CONTESTED CONCEPT

The term punitiveness, a complex and multidimensional concept, is both defined and measured in a variety of different ways. Little consensus exists on how to best define punitiveness. Snacken and Dumortier (2012), reviewing efforts to conceptualize punitiveness, note a common emphasis on harsh attitudes, policies, and practices regarding punishment. Pratt and colleagues (2005), mapping the contours of what they term 'the new punitiveness' observe that punishment is increasingly disproportionate to the crime committed. The proliferation of high security prisons, longer sentences, declining prison conditions, a shift away from rehabilitation, an emphasis on public humiliation exemplified by billboards, mug shot websites, and chain gangs, stripping convicted people of rights such as voting, and the militarization of the

police illustrate this disturbing trend (Garland 2001, Pratt et al. 2005). Ultimately, that which was once exceptional is moving into the mainstream (Pratt et al. 2005). Here, punitiveness is defined as overly harsh and disproportionate attitudes, actions, and symbols. Punitiveness is most prominent in Anglo-Saxon countries, particularly the United States.

To further complicate matters, there are a variety of ways to measure punitiveness. According to Snacken and Dumortier (2012), criminology has focused primarily on public opinion, media discourse, political rhetoric, legislation, and on-the ground practice as indicators of punitiveness. Generally speaking, particularly in quantitative work, the most common marker of punitiveness to date has been imprisonment rates, with more people behind bars denoting higher degrees of punitiveness. Scholarship has also used the length of imprisonment as an indicator, citing longer sentences as evidence of punitveness. Other scholars have looked at laws such as "three-strikes and you're out" as indicators of punitiveness. The re-emergence of sanctions such as chain gangs aimed at shaming and degradation are also taken as indicators of punitiveness (Pratt et al. 2005). In sum, the focus is on the quality and quantity of punishment.

Although punitiveness is generally used to described crime policy and practice in the criminological literature, I use it a bit more broadly to encompass both social and crime policy, which are intimately intertwined. As scholars such as Beckett and Western (2001) and Downes and Hansen (2006) remind us, societies differ on how they balance social and crime policy in their efforts to manage marginality. Analysis suggests that exclusionary societies such as the United States tend to emphasize criminal justice policy, while more inclusive societies such as Norway focus more heavily on social policy. The ways in which societies prioritize one type of policy over the other has profound ramifications for addressing crime. Comparative research has

been and will continue to be instrumental in uncovering the mechanisms underlying punitiveness and working towards calmer and more productive ways to cope with crime.

THE WELFARE STATE

Welfare states both reflect and reproduce existing value systems (Pratt and Eriksson 2013). At its most basic, a welfare state is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring some level of basic socio-economic security for its citizens. What constitutes the bare minimum standard to be provided by the state is time and place contingent (Esping-Andersen 1990). At its best, strong, comprehensive, and universal welfare states can help mend social cleavages, promote social harmony, contribute to political stability, equalize living conditions and life chances between citizens, and shore up security (Kuhnle 2011). Striking differences between the United States and Norway can be seen in areas such as taxation, social spending, public service employment, income distribution, and poverty levels (Edlund 1999).

De-commodification outcomes also differ across welfare clusters. De-comodification refers to "…the degree to which individuals, or families, can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of market participation" (Esping-Andersen 1990: 37). Criminologists (Messner and Rosenfeld 2007, Lappi- Seppälä 2008) studying the relationship between de-commodification, crime, and punishment, have observed that government efforts to reduce citizen reliance on the market correlates to with lower rates of violent crime as well as lower rates of incarceration.

Speaking to differences in social welfare, Esping-Andersen (1990:1) asserts that "…the kind of welfare provided will be qualitatively different, as will its prioritization relative to competing activities, be they warfare, law and order, or the promotion of profits and trade." These competing priorities help to shape the institutional structure of societies in ways that

impact crime and responses to crime (Pratt and Eriksson 2013). Highlighting this finding, research by Lappi- Seppälä (2008) finds an inverse relationship between welfare generosity and imprisonment. This suggests that greater welfare generosity is often linked to lower rates of imprisonment. Conversely, where the welfare state is weak, rates of imprisonment tend to be higher. Here, I outline American neoliberalism and the Scandinavian welfare state to better contextualize state talk across cultures.

American Neoliberalism

Using Esping-Anderssen's (1990) three system welfare regime typology, the United States' neoliberal approach to social welfare and the management of social problems makes it a leading example of a Liberal Welfare State. Messner and Rosenfeld (2007), drawing on Esping-Andersen's (1990) work on welfare regimes, note how the dominance of the economy in Liberal Welfare States breeds competitive individualism. Similarly, Currie (1997), also focusing on the dominance of the economy in social life, argues that market societies such as the United States are characterized by an emphasis on private gain at the expense of social supports.

Social benefits in the American context are means-tested leading to a public-private social service bifurcation in which the poor are forced to apply for social supports from the state while others are funneled into private service schemes. Such a system separates and stigmatizes the most precarious individuals and families in the name of a cultural ethos of self-reliance and freedom of choice (Esping-Andersen 1990). Directing welfare programs at the worst off in society has the effect of encouraging hostile attitudes towards the state (Edlund 1999). The result of highly stigmatized and difficult to obtain social supports is the commodification of labor. This leaves people totally reliant on the shifting whims of the market, as American social welfare policies do little to protect citizens from the volatile nature of capitalism. While the United States

provides notoriously poor social supports, it is worth noting that the middle and upper classes receive tax privileges that are not classified (and subsequently stigmatized) as "welfare" (Esping-Andersen 1990). This speaks to the ways in which the state aids more privileged members of society. This aid is obscured in ways that protect privilege and contribute to social divisions along class lines which pits so-called "makers" against their lower class "taker" counterparts. Though there is no singular agreed upon definition of the term neo-liberalism, Wacquant (2010) outlines four core themes that span definitions: economic deregulation, welfare state devolution and recomposition, expansion of the penal apparatus, and emphasis on personal responsibility. Speaking to characteristics of what he calls the market economy, Currie (1997) identifies seven key trends: the destruction of livelihood, growing economic inequality and material deprivation, the withdrawal of public supports, the erosion of informal and communal networks of care, the spread of a hard culture, the unregulated market of the technology violence (primarily guns), and the weakening of social and political alternatives. Scholars such as Potter (2013) and Standing (2012) emphasize that neoliberalism is based on the idea that competitiveness and commodification through open markets, free trade, and deregulation is the most rational way to achieve economic prosperity.

Various criminologists, theorizing about neoliberalism, have drawn attention to the increasingly Darwinian nature of American society. By this, scholars such as Currie (1997, 2004) refer to the competitive struggle to succeed and the rejection of mutual caring and responsibility. Winlow and Hall (2013) also speak to the increasingly Darwinian nature of society pointing to the worship of selfishness as a socioeconomic principle that has penetrated to the very heart of social institutions with nary a thought to their destructive social consequences. Such conditions, according to Currie (2004), foster a culture of 'care-lessness.' Attacks on both public services and

marginalized populations have been justified in the name of neoliberal free markets and "personal responsibility" (Currie 1998).

In the United States, there has also been a noted emphasis by politicians, the media, and individuals alike on differentiating the "deserving" from "undeserving." Currie (2004: 88) observes that, "...people are quickly and sharply defined as either 'in' or 'out.' There is little tolerance for legitimate mistakes…or occasional moral stumbling." This observation highlights the sharp divisions between "good" and "bad" citizens who should know the difference between "right" and "wrong." In doling out the "undeserving" label, society attempts to legitimize mistreatment, punishment, and lack of support for those who falter in Darwinian capitalist societies (Ganz 1995).

Speaking to the "sink or swim" ethos of American culture, Currie (2004) illustrates how easily we come to define people as undeserving and worthy of exclusion. Furthermore, American culture emphasizes that "…exclusion and the withdrawal of support are regarded as not only acceptable but laudable ways of dealing with those who fail or who break the rules" (Currie 2004: 97). Essentially, society is absolved of any responsibility for the wellbeing of individuals in ways that pave the way for defining both individuals and social programs as unworthy of care and investment (Reiman and Leighton 2010). As such, economic failure has been defined and heavily reinforced as a moral defect and a conscious choice which people could choose to rectify if they so desired (Ganz 1995). In essence, "…pushing people away in times of trouble or need is regarded not only as necessary but as deserved, one facet of a moral vision in which anything resembling 'softness'…is seen as both wrong and ultimately counterproductive" (Currie 2004: 104). In the end, in the neoliberal social order, it is assumed those who are "worthy" will eventually be rewarded (Potter 2013).

The ascendance of neoliberal ideology and culture has had substantial impacts on social policy in the United States. Excuses for dismantling social supports include the following: welfare discourages people from working, welfare causes poverty, and the notion that family and religious charity are superior ways to address the ill effects of capitalism (Esping-Andersen 1990). In response to these excuses, the Keynsian post-war welfare state has increasingly been disassembled under the pretense that it is a drain on taxpayers and an impediment to social-Darwinian survival of the fittest (Potter 2013). In practice what this has done is shifted risks and costs from the collective towards individuals (Standing 2012).

Examples of this rolling back of the state include a move away from Keynesian policies such as redistributive tax schemes, supports for workers, unemployment benefits, assistance for the poor, and child-friendly programs (Beckett and Western 2001, Standing 2012). Neoliberalism is also exemplified by lower direct taxes, lower corporate taxes, greater subsidization of corporations, and reduced employer contributions to employee well-being benefits such as health care and retirement (Standing 2012).

The Scandinavian Welfare State

In contrast to Liberal Welfare States such as the United States, Social-democratic Welfare State regimes such as Norway have approached welfare reform under two overarching premises. The first is that workers require social resources such as health care and education to participate as full citizens (Esping-Andersen 1990). Emphasizing the importance of employment, government policy in Norway has aimed to keep workers employed, even during economic downturns (Currie 1997). Similarly, Lacey (2010) observes that there has been less pressure for the flexibilization of the work force in highly coordinated countries such as Norway. Protections also exist to help people who fall out (temporarily or permanently) of the labor market in the

form of parental leave, unemployment, disability and retirement insurance (Hummelsheim et al. 2011). Notably, a high proportion of Norwegians, roughly one in three, work in the public sector (Bjørnskov and Tinggaard Svendsen 2013). The second underlying premise is that social policy is both emancipatory and necessary for economic efficiency. As a consequence of these two overarching philosophies, social policy in Norway emphasizes the easing of a variety of social ills such as poverty, unemployment, and complete wage dependency. Through initiatives such as these, the social-democratic welfare state aims to increase political engagement and reduce social divisions that serve as barriers to social and political unity (Esping-Andersen 1990). Speaking of this more 'compassionate capitalism,' Currie (1997) describes societies such as Norway as more sensitive to pro-social factors such as social solidarity, equity, and community values.

The Scandinavian Welfare State, hailed as a global role model, is known for successful outcomes (Kuhnle 2011). Norway is characterized by high employment rates, high levels of social investment, low poverty rates, relatively low income inequality, highly ranked education, and a comparatively high quality of life (Lappi- Seppälä 2007; Von Hofer 2004; Barker 2012). The discovery of oil in the 1960s, the subsequent establishment of state owned oil companies, and strong political support across party lines for a long term fund dedicated to maintaining the welfare state has also helped to reinforce Norway's strong social safety net (Østerud 2005).

Norwegian social policy also emphasizes universal access to social goods such as health care, education, parental leave, and child care (Esping-Andersen 1990). Making these programs broadly available helps to maintain support for generous social supports by citizens and political figures alike. As a consequence, it is not surprising that for the most disadvantaged Norwegians, the welfare state provides a comparatively high level of basic security (Edlund 1999). Generous social supports such as those provided in Norway encourage the de-commodification of citizens

by freeing them from total, unforgiving dependence on the volatile whims of neoliberal capitalism. Social supports such as those previously mentioned also enable citizens to better balance work and family life (Esping-Andersen 1990). In sum, social supports such as these help to promote both economic stability and social justice in way that reflect Norway's cultural emphasis on solidarity and equality (Kuhnle 2011).

To finance universal social programs, which may be utilized by all citizens regardless of social class, Norway relies on high taxes. These taxes, regarded as some of the highest in the world, transfer roughly 50% of the nation's income for redistribution (Bjørnskov and Tinggaard Svendsen 2013). Relatively little resistance to high taxation exists in Norway as most citizens support a strong welfare state (Jensen and Tinggaard Svendsen 2011). These factors speak to Norway's more community-oriented and socially inclusive cultural orientation, which underlies social and criminal justice policies alike (Carle 2013).

Generous and universal social supports such as those provided in Norway help to decomodify labor, which enables citizens to meet their basic needs regardless of their position in the labor market and helps to cushion them from the volatilities of the market. While no state has completely freed citizens from market dependence, Scandinavian countries have come the closest. In summary, "it is therefore quite evident, for Scandinavia at least, that the welfare state is a mighty opponent to the economy's inegalitarian thrust" (Esping-Andersen 1990: 57).

A TALE OF TWO POLITICAL CULTURES

Notable political differences also exist between the United States and Norway. Lacey (2010) and Karstedt (2015) observe that criminology has concerned itself little with this fact to the detriment of our understanding of how societies react to crime. Scholars such as Tonry (2004), Green (2008), Lacey (2008), and Karstedt (2015) have linked the way in which societies

do politics to different ways of doing crime control. Ultimately, political culture shapes how we define and respond to problems facing society (Green 2008). Lappi- Seppälä (2008) observes that socioeconomic factors, trust, and public opinion do not lead to social policy without first being filtered through the political system which reflects the culture in which it is embedded. This, as noted by Lacey (2010), is an important consideration for those concerned with reactions to crime as the political realm contributes to how citizens experience anxiety and insecurity as well as how societies react to crime. Here, I briefly sketch the political climates in the United States and Norway to set the stage for better understanding government talk across cultures.

American Political Culture

American politics, in the majoritarian democratic tradition, is suffused with an overarching ethic of exclusion and competition (Lijphart 1999). The United States is characterized by a decentralized political system featuring weak party discipline, an unusual emphasis on personalities embedded within political parties, special interest politics, low social trust, and high levels of moralism (Lacey 2008, Edlund 1999). Tonry (2004) argues that American politics is particularly susceptible to the whims of emotional over-reaction in policy making. Lappi- Seppälä (2012) observes that politicians in majoritarian countries are particularly inclined towards crisis talk. Such talk is aimed at drawing attention to social and political crises in an effort to convince the public to vote for them.

Not surprisingly, the United States has a notably toxic political arena (Altheide and Johnson 2011). The American political context is also curious in that people who publically speak about the evils of "big government" actively seek government office. Politicians of this vein and their supporters often speak of the need for a "smaller government" while simultaneously supporting a large military, social programs such as Medicare and Social

Security aimed at retirees, and a large and highly punitive criminal justice system. In this context, it is not unheard of for Medicare recipients to use their benefits while criticizing government involvement in healthcare (Lunceford 2011).

Scholars have also written about a "paranoid" style of politics in the United States. Hofstadter (1965: 3) writes that this paranoia is characterized by "…heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy…" The politically paranoid commonly feel persecuted and that their nation, culture, and ultimately way of life are under siege by opposing forces. Issues are framed in terms of good vs evil, and us vs them, emphasizing a black and white world view with little room for compromise or partial success (Hofstadter 1965). Furthermore, that which is deeply disapproved of becomes equated with evil and immorality in such a divided and partisan system (Young 2007). At its most extreme, this means that few means are off limits in defeating the opposition. Evidence of this paranoid political style abounds across topics such as abortion, gun rights, immigration, drugs, welfare, and terrorism (Tonry 2008). As Tonry (2004) points out, elections can be won or lost on account of single issues such as these driven by special interest groups. Often, these battles are framed as a matter of absolute good versus evil.

Political trust tends to be relatively low in the United States with people believing that the government fails to 'deliver the goods' so to speak. As a consequence, people who do not feel that their needs are getting met tend to be cynical, which threatens both social welfare and democracy. Sensing that the political machine is broken and that politicians are divorced from the realities facing constituents, American's have little faith that society's challenges can be successfully addressed through political channels.

Political discourse in the United States is also world renowned for its lack of civility (Benson 2011). Altheide and Johnson (2011) cite Arizona as a prime example of American

political incivility. Speaking more broadly, Goodnight (2014) argues that civility has worn thin in American politics. Likewise, Lunceford (2011: 31) observes "It is especially troubling that such sentiments for violent overthrow are now being espoused by the very individuals that seek election to public office." Goodnight (2014: 679) posits that "Hard times breed hard rhetoric, and twenty-first-century American politics have offered no exception to this rule."

The United States is also perhaps unique in its blurring of politics and guns. Politicians such as Congresswoman Michelle Bachman (R-MN) urge their constituents to arm themselves (Boser and Lake 2014). Some of this violent imagery and rhetoric was directed specifically at Giffords, the target of Loughner's violence (Smith and Hollihan 2014, Boser and Lake 2014). Sarah Palin, former Alaska Governor and Republican candidate for Vice President in 2008, posted a map to Facebook using gun cross-hairs to draw attention to Democratic districts, including the one represented by Giffords, with the phrase "Don't retreat, reload" (Benson 2011, Cortese 2012). The map was removed shortly after the Tucson shootings, though Palin and her supporters contended that there was no relationship between violent language and imagery and physical violence (Benson 2011). In another incident, Jesse Kelly, the republican candidate running against Gifford's in Arizona, held a campaign event advertising "Get on Target for Victory in November Help remove Gabrielle Giffords from Office. Shoot a fully automatic M16 with Jesse Kelly" (Smith and Hollihan 2014: 591). Furthermore, prior to being shot in 2011, Giffords had received numerous threats. For instance, her district office had to be evacuated in light of the discovery of a suspicious package. Shortly after Congress approved health care reform, her office windows were smashed (Marion and Willard 2014). At an earlier super market meeting with her constituents in 2009, a protestor was removed from the scene after a pistol fell out of its holster and bounced on the ground (Zoellner 2011). In response Giffords (in Nowicki

2011) told the *Arizona Republic "*When you represent a district that includes the home of the O.K. Corral and Tombstone, 'The Town Too Tough to Die,' nothing's a surprise out in Cochise County."

On March 22, 2010, Gifford's spoke about vandalism to her office on MSNBC arguing that violent rhetoric, such as Palin's map putting democratic districts in literal crosshairs, could have dire consequences (Boser and Lake 2014). Eerily, Giffords, concerned about rhetorical incivility in the political arena, emailed her friend Kentucky Secretary of State Trey Grayson, a republican, expressing her desire to promote centrism and moderation only a day prior to the shooting (Engels 2012).

Norwegian Political Climate

Speaking to the Norwegian case, Green (2008:13) observes that "…features of Nordic consensual political culture have allowed it to weather late-modern pressures more adaptively than its counterparts in, for instance, England, the USA, and Australia." Norway's consensual political culture is succinctly summarized by Lijphart (1999) as characterized by attributes such as: inclusiveness, bargaining, negotiation, and ultimately compromise. This drive for consensus aims to account for as many views as possible (Lappi- Seppälä 2008). Bondeson (2005: 195), speaking to the comparatively high functionality of Scandinavian democracies, notes that "…everyone was made to feel that they had a role to play and were involved in the country's social and economic development."

The consensus-democracy approach to government favored by Norway has several notable attributes. For instance, the presence of multiple political parties in a system based upon proportional representation in parliament requires the formation of coalitions to form a governing majority. This makes it difficult for any single party to dominate policy, helping to diffuse

power. As a consequence, compromise in government is a necessity (Østerud 2005). Proportionally representative electoral systems embedded in social democratic coordinated market economies also tend to correlate with lower levels of social inequality, the election of left of center governments, and a relatively high deference to professional bureaucracies such as penal system officials, prosecutors, and judges. As a consequence, these actors may be better insulated from political expediency and public opinion, thus paving the way for less punitive responses to crime (Lacey 2008).

Political discourse in consensus-democracies such as Norway also tends to be more civil and less prone to extremism (Hamilton 2013). Under consensus conditions, there is less incentive for politicians to resort to crisis talk emphasizing political and social crises in an effort to paint the opposition in a poor light (Lappi- Seppälä 2012). Furthermore, given the less competitive nature of Norwegian politics and society more broadly, there is less to gain by pushing extreme policy measures which also helps to temper punitiveness in public policies.

Looking at a case of child-on-child homicide in the 1990s, Green (2007) argues that Norwegian political culture shaped the way that the crime was framed and how the boys were ultimately treated thus illustrating the importance of culturally appropriate responses. Political systems which emphasize consensus over intense competition may help to moderate punitiveness in a context where there are fewer incentives to politicize crime for electoral gain (Green 2008). Similarly, Lappi- Seppälä (2008: 314) observes that "consensus politics also lessen controversies, produce less crisis talk, inhibit dramatic policy shifts, and sustain consistent long-term policies." In sum, Norway's consensus orientation help to foster greater "kindness and gentleness" in public policy (Lijphart 1999: 301).

SOCIAL SOLIDARITY AND INTERPERSONAL TRUST

Interpersonal trust and the social solidarity it generates differ across cultures. Social solidarity and trust are difficult constructs to measure. Researchers rely on questions such as: would you say that most people can be trusted? Do you think that most people would take advantage of you? And are people generally helpful or looking out primarily for themselves (Visser et al. 2013)?

Trust is a vital societal resource which can help to reduce moral hazard, mediate the impact of diversity, bolster societal efficiency, and facilitate a more equitable distribution of resources (Crepaz 2008). High levels of trust in one's fellow citizens is associated with strong welfare provisions, low levels of fear, greater equality, and lower levels of puntiveness. This suggests that trust plays a vital role in societal peace (Lappi- Seppälä 2008). Factors such as history, culture, and institutional arrangements influence trust in a given society. Literature on social trust debates whether trust is a trait denoting instability or a state denoting stability over time. Taking the position that societal trust is a state which reflects long term trends, Crepaz (2008) classifies the United States as a society low in societal collective trust and Norway as a society high in social trust.

Seeking to better understand why people in some countries are more trusting than others, Crepaz (2008) analyzes factors thought to undergird societal trust. He argues that institutional balance is a key factor shaping societal trust. Institutional balance links to interpersonal trust and social solidarity given that an interplay exists between trust and the welfare state. Similarly, Lappi- Seppälä (2012) points out, strong welfare states help to reduce social distance between people, breeds empathy, fosters solidarity, and promotes a sense of collective responsibility. Although it is difficult to assert causality, Esping-Andersen (1990) and Crepaz (2008) both argue

that strong welfare states help to breed and maintain trust at the societal level. Linking trust and state efficacy, Herreros (2012) argues that more effective states breed greater social trust. This research speaks to the importance of cultural and institutional arrangements in shaping trust in a given society (Crepaz 2008). In essence, trust is a necessary ingredient for the welfare state as it helps to facilitate social interaction, solve collective problems, and reduce transaction cost. Taxes are sustained by trust in that if you trust others to pay their fair share you are more likely to be inclined to pay your own. Institutions and trust precede the development of strong welfare states and condition adaptations to change (Esping-Andersen 1990, Crepaz 2008).

Closely linked with interpersonal trust is social solidarity. Key to this solidarity are notions of shared responsibility which undergird views on the etiology of crime as well as social and criminal justice policy. Societies with a greater emphasis on individualism tend to view crime as an individual level failure, while societies with a greater degree of social solidarity are more inclined to look at the larger social context in assessing the origins of crime (Green 2008). Research suggests that strong feelings of social solidarity may help to put the brakes on punitive impulses by fostering greater tolerance and empathy for others. This makes it more likely that alternatives to imprisonment will be taken more seriously (Lappi- Seppälä 2008). Similarly, in later work, Lappi- Seppälä (2012) observes that countries with higher incarceration rates tend to have lower levels of trust in their fellow citizens.

Social Solidarity and Interpersonal Trust in the United States

The United States is notable for its low level of universal and generalized trust. Instead of universal trust in society, Crepaz (2008) argues that Americans tend to rate higher on primordial trust. By this he means that Americans are primarily concerned with their in-group and policies which promote their in group. This makes sense given the United States' noted penchant for

exclusion, suspicion, and anxiety which is in part bred by inequality and a lack of social supports in precarious times (Pratt and Eriksson 2013, Jensen and Svendsen 2011).

Welfare state scholars note that a general lack of trust in fellow citizens, in countries such as the United States, correlates with a weak social safety net. In essence, it is difficult to persuade people who do not trust in their fellow citizens not to take advantage of them or to pay the high taxes necessary to sustain a strong universal welfare state (Jensen and Tinggard Svendsen 2011). Likewise, Herreros (2012), in his work linking government effectiveness to social trust, finds that the United States, rating lower on government effectiveness than Northern European countries and several of its Anglo-Saxon counterparts, have lower rates of social trust.

Social Solidarity and Interpersonal Trust in Norway

Scandinavian societies are notably high in social trust (Appleton 2014, Amna et al. 2007; Snacken 2010; Wollebæk et al. 2012). Norwegians tend to be universal, generalized trusters denoting a great concern for society as a whole. This larger radius of social concern helps to sustain the high taxes needed to fund strong social supports (Jensen and Svendsen 2011, Crepaz 2008). Crepaz (2008) argues that this trust is built and sustained by strong social institutions. Likewise, Jensen and Svendsen (2011) observe a feedback loop between universal/generalized trust and strong social supports. In other words, well-functioning social institutions reduce feelings of being cheated which in turn helps to foster and maintain high levels of trust. A more equitable provision of public goods also establishes and helps to maintain trust by reducing social distance (Jensen and Svendsen 2011). Trust also helps to decrease resentments that fuel calls to undermine the welfare state which in turn helps the welfare state better weather trends such as globalization and neoliberalization (Crepaz 2008). Examining the relationship between state efficacy and social trust, Herreros (2012) also finds that Norway, closely followed by its

Nordic neighbors, rates highest in both government effectiveness and percentage of social trusters out of a forty-seven country sample.

It has also been hypothesized that trends towards penal severity may be constrained by strong feelings of social solidarity and shared responsibility to address the root causes of social problems, including crime. Looking at inter-human trust, Statistics Norway (2011) reports that on a scale of 0 (one can never be too careful) to 10 (most people can be trusted), the average rating is 7.3, suggesting strong trust in others. These strong feelings of social solidarity and responsibility are fostered and maintained by a strong welfare state and aspirations for equality (Cavadino and Dignan 2006). Commentators also note the link between punishment and social inequality that has been taken more seriously in Norwegian policy and rhetoric than in other countries (Snacken 2010; Lappi- Seppälä 2007). Instead of viewing crime as largely an individual level failure, Norway has been more inclined to view crime as the result of failed integration of citizens into society (Ugelvik 2012). This philosophy, reflective of a belief in the connection between social welfare service provision and crime, is captured in the old Scandinavian slogan "good social policy is the best criminal policy" (Lappi- Seppälä 2007: 274). Lappi- Seppälä (2007) suggests that Scandinavian countries have been more moderate in their approach to crime for this reason. Essentially, people may be more likely to comply when levels of trust in the government and political legitimacy are high. This illustrates the importance of the relationship between government and citizens in conditioning responses to crime.

TRUST IN GOVERNMENT

Trust in government is also key to better understanding the different reactions to mass tragedy across cultures. Scholarship examining trust in the state suggests that there is a relationship between state legitimacy and penal trends. Lappi- Seppälä (2012) observes that there

is less need for tough on crime posturing and rhetoric in countries where trust in government is high. In practice, where legitimacy is high, punitive impulses and practices tend to be lower than in places where legitimacy is low (Green 2009). Illustrating this, Lappi- Seppälä (2012) asserts that countries where government legitimacy is high tend to imprison fewer of their citizens. Trust also links to strong, universal social supports in that where citizens do not trust the state it is difficult to develop and/or sustain strong social supports (Jensen and Tinggard Svendsen 2011).

Trust in the U.S. Government

Research has established that Americans harbor a general distrust in government. Factors such as a decentralized power structure, an emphasis on special interest groups, and the constant need to focus on the next election in a winner takes all system reduce the efficacy of the state which in turn undermines the trust of the public (Edlund 1999). Crime has become central to American political discourse as state actors compete to shore up support in the face of a crisis of legitimacy (Beckett 1997, Newburn and Jones 2005). Political elites proffer the criminal justice system as a solution to a myriad of complex social problems (Beckett 1997, Young 2007).

Criminologists studying trust (Garland 2001, Lappi- Seppälä 2008) describe a loss of public confidence. In response to the state's crisis of legitimacy, we see the enactment of harsh, expressive punishment. Speaking to the relationship between mistrust of government and support for punitive sanctions, Page (2004) observes that crime is treated as a bigger problem in times where trust in government is low. When trust in government is low, citizens are more apt to worry that "activist" judges, favoring offenders, will impose lenient sentences. Politicians stoke and subsequently capitalize on these fears (Page 2004). Speaking to the representation of crime in countries such as the United States, Peelo and Soothill (2011) observe that social commentaries on the subject feed on the drama of crime and fearfulness in the quest for political

advantage. Essentially, politicians are able to mobilize punitive get tough crime policy in ways that shore-up their legitimacy while simultaneously undermining experts and academics who are painted as soft on crime. Page (2004: 374) argues that "governmental mistrust thus simultaneously fuels and is fueled by law and order policy makers" highlighting the relationship between politicians, trust, punitive public sentiments, and policy.

Trust in the Norwegian Government

Speaking to trust in the government, Fimreite and colleagues (2013: 848) note that Norway has long been a "state friendly society." Norway is high in 'double legitimacy' in which the state is regarded as trustworthy on the basis of both procedural and outcome legitimacy. By procedural legitimacy, Kuhnle (2011) refers to faith in the state's decision-making process and by outcome legitimacy he refers to the results of state decision-making. Scholarship has established that when the state is perceived as caring, effective, and legitimate, trust levels tend to be higher (Edlund 1999).

Trust in public institutions tends to be high and resilient in Norway (Thomassen et al. 2013). According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2013a) data, Norway ranks comparatively higher in trust in the state as well as a variety of its institutions. For instance, 66% of Norwegians reported satisfaction with and confidence in the national government with 81% and 80% respectively reporting trust in the judicial system and local police in 2012. Relative demographic homogeneity and the historical presence of few "visible others" also likely play a role in facilitating easier passage and maintenance of liberal social policies in that homogeneity may promote and maintain a society with egalitarian values, tolerance, trust, and inclusion (Lappi- Seppälä 2007; Green 2007; Ugelvik 2012). Speaking to this, former State Secretary Erik Øwre Thorshaug (2011:2), in a speech shortly before the

attacks, suggests that Norway is "one of the few countries in the world where the government give[s] public support to organizations whose sole purpose is working against the government." Statements like this illustrate Norway's exceptional approach to dissent prior to the July 22 attacks.

INSECURITY AND FEAR OF CRIME

Fear negatively impacts individuals, social networks, neighborhoods, and ultimately entire societies. Various social surveys have illustrated cross-national variation in levels of fear prompting scholars to examine the factors driving these trends. Research suggests that the broader social milieu shapes collective levels of fear. More specifically, broader feelings of security or insecurity feed fear of crime. Scholars have found that fear of crime correlates with social ills such as lower self-reported indicators of health, diminished levels of trust in one's fellows, compromised social solidarity, and decreased participation in social life (Hummelsheim et al. 2011, Visser et al. 2013). Snacken (2015) also observes that hostility towards immigrants feeds fear of crime. These findings suggest that there is a relationship between welfare state strength and fear of crime in that a strong welfare state can help to insulate people from broader feelings of ontological insecurity (Hummelsheim et al. 2011).

No universal definition of fear of crime exists. Looking across definitions to identify common factors, Henson and Reyn (2015: 92) argue that fear of crime constitutes "(i) an emotional response (ii) to a danger or threat (iii) of an actual or potential criminal incident. Measuring fear of crime, like with any other social phenomenon, is wrought with complexity. As such, researchers have relied on indicators such as: feelings of safety while walking home at night in one's neighborhood and the degree and frequency to which people fear being victimized by crime category (Visser et al. 2013, Henson and Reyn 2015).

Fear, which is socially constructed, is shaped by the environment in which we are embedded, highlighting the time and place contingency of risk perceptions. Where social structures such as work and family are more fluid and trust in the state is low, there is less certainty which in turn may help to fuel feelings of fear (Tonry 2004). Strong welfare states may reduce these feelings of generalized social anxiety in turn reducing collective levels of fear (Hummelsheim et al. 2011).

Fear of crime in an age of increasing anxiety and insecurity has proven itself to be politically serviceable, particularly in neoliberal countries such as the United States (Sparks 2006). Scholars such as Simon (2007) and Hummelsheim and colleagues (2011) observe that fear bolsters support for tough on crime policies in an environment where crime and justice issues are highly emotive (Garland 2001). Similarly, Snacken (2015) names fear of crime as a key factor underlying punitiveness. Conversely, in countries such as social-democratic Norway, where fear of crime is comparatively low (Visser et al. 2013), discourse and policy may be less driven by fear.

Insecurity and Fear of Crime in the United States

According to scholars such as Garland (2001) and Beckett (1997), fear of crime is a prominent cultural theme, particularly in places such as the United States where fear of crime is notably high amongst its citizens. King (1998) similarly observes that the United States is consumed by a national fear of crime and thus highly sensitive to crime and justice issues. Zimring and Hawkins (1998) also observe that fear of crime in America remains high even when crime rates decline.

Consequently, discourse (both media and political) and policy are influenced by this fear of crime. Politicians on both sides of the American political aisle have capitalized on this fear

attempting to outmaneuver the opposing side in the quest to be seen as harder on crime

(Newburn and Jones 2005). Fear of crime also tends to be more widespread in places where

there is high intolerance of certain social conditions and groups who serve as scapegoats

(Hummelsheim et al. 2011). Zimring and Hawkins (1998) also observe that in places where

lethal violence is widespread such as the United States, people are more likely to feel fearful and

insecure.

Linking the welfare state to fear of crime, Lappi- Seppälä (2012) observes that where the

welfare state is weak, people tend to be more suspicious and fearful which in turn compromises

social trust and solidarity. Garland (2001), speaking to public opinion research, notes that the

United States is notably fearful with people reporting that crime is a worsening problem

regardless of actual documented trends. Americans also report little faith in the ability of the

state to reduce crime. In a time and place where crime is dramatized, the notion of a fearful,

angry, public demanding strong and harsh punishment holds sway over politics (Garland 2001,

Tonry 2004). Beckett (1997), argues that punishment is seen as a way to soothe American's fear

and anxiety.

Insecurity and Fear of Crime in Norway

Levels of fear of crime are comparatively low in Scandinavian countries such as Norway

(Bondeson 2005, Visser et al. 2013, Hummelsheim et al. 2011). Subsequently, Norwegians and

their Scandinavian brethren report feeling safer than citizens of other countries. Currie (2015)

links reduced levels of fear to lower levels of lethal violence. Indeed, most Norwegians are able

to conduct their day to day business with little prospect of encountering violence, particularly

lethal violence. Scholars, attempting to explain why Scandinavians report less fear and greater

feelings of safety have theorized that there is a link between strong social supports and lower

feelings of fear in that social protections help to mitigate anxiety by reducing social and economic risks (Visser et al. 2013, Kuhnle 2011).

DIVERGENT PENAL SENSIBILITIES

Literature sketching the contours of the so-called punitive turn has grappled with the intersection of global forces and local characteristics (Hamilton 2013). While some scholars have focused largely on the role of global forces such as neoliberalism and late-modernity (Garland 2001, Simon 2007, Waquant 2009), others have emphasized the need to examine how local characteristics help facilitate or resist punitiveness (Hamilton 2013, Green 2008, Cavadino and Dignan 2006, Lacey 2008, Pratt and Eriksson 2013, Pratt et al. 2005).

Much has been written on America's role as world leader in punitive law and order. A burgeoning literature has also drawn attention to Norway's comparatively moderate approach to the problem of crime. These divergent responses to the problem of crime reflect differing approaches to social control in the age of anxiety (Pratt and Eriksson 2013). As noted by scholars such as Cavadino and Dignan (2006), these differences are undergirded by social and economic differences. While the United States has relied largely on exclusionary attitudes and policies, countries such as Norway have fostered more inclusionary attitudes and policies.

As Sparks (2006) reminds us, how societies respond to crime is shaped by the ways in which they talk about crime. This point sensitizes us to the great need to understand the link between talk and action which, according to Garland (2001), must be taken seriously in our attempts to strive towards more moderate reactions to crime. The present study takes this point to heart in exploring the link between context, talk, and action. Here, I briefly outline the state of crime and justice in the United States and Norway.

An American Response to Crime

Scholars have detailed the neoliberal-tendency towards exclusionary attitudes and policies best exemplified by the United States (Cavadino and Dignan 2006). Penal policy and practice in the United States are largely symbolic rather than instrumental, concerned more with soothing public anxiety surrounding crime than do something constructive in response to crime (Green 2008). King (1998: 604), speaking to this, asserts that

> the result has been a national hoax in which politicians have talked tough, and public debate has been reduced to soundbite slogans in which the real risks to the public, and the actual operation of the criminal justice system, are never exposed to proper analysis.

The outcome of America's overarching obsession with conservative, individual level, explanations of crime has been an emphasis on ever longer and harsher punishment. This has had the effect of diverting attention from structural explanations of crime causation as well as social supports which might help to prevent crime (King 1998).

The state, in response to questions about its legitimacy, has increasingly relied on punitive policies in its quest to establish competence (Sparks 2006). The unraveling of social cohesion, weak interdependencies between citizens, and a media which inspires fear all coalesce to undermine trust, civic responsibility, and rational deliberation in ways that undergird America's reputation as a punitive leader on the global stage (Pratt and Eriksson 2013).

Beckett and Western (2001: 55), speaking to the institutional imbalance pervasive in the American case, observe that "reduced welfare expenditures are not indicative of a shift toward reduced government intervention in social life (as is implied by the claim that welfare reform reflects the rise of 'neo-liberalism'), but rather a shift toward a more exclusionary and punitive approach to the regulation of social marginality." This point is echoed by Hallsworth and Lea (2011: 142) who observe that "the state may withdraw in some areas while intensifying its

interventions in others" highlighting the rolling back of the welfare arm of the state and the rolling out of the coercive carceral state. Waquant (2010:203), also weighing in on the shifting face of the state, notes that "the misery of American welfare and the grandeur of American prisonfare at century's turn are the two sides of the same political coin."

Looking at factors that contribute to qualitatively harsh punishment in mass quantities, Lacey (2008) identifies a variety of conditions in the U.S. that fuel punitiveness. Characteristics of the American experience have all aligned to contribute to American Exceptionalism in punishment which is described as "thick on emotion and exclusion" (Pratt and Eriksson 2013: 173). For instance, Messner and Rosenfeld (2007) link American exceptionalism in punitiveness to weak informal control in the wake of increased economic dominance. Alexander (2010), writing about the legacy of racialized social control spanning from slavery to Jim Crow to mass incarceration details the ways in which families, communities, and political participation have suffered in America. Simon (2007) links the war on drugs, felon disenfranchisement, the collapse of rehabilitation, determinant sentencing, undermining of judicial autonomy and the increasing power of prosecutors as legal actors to American punitiveness.

Snacken (2015) observes that tolerance for deviance tends to decrease in the context of economic uncertainty and decline. One reaction to insecurity by the contemporary American culture of intolerance has been to call for more prohibitions (both legal and normative) as well as more and more broadly applied draconian punishments. As a consequence, "the always criminal becomes more criminalized, the quasi-criminal becomes criminal, and, around these, large penumbra of informal prohibitions arise" (Young 2007: 15). According to Garland (2001) and Potter (2013), crime represents an obvious, omnipresent embodiment of risk that must be anticipated, managed, and kept away. Similarly, Cheliotis (2013) suggests that penality is one

way that elites in the U.S. have attempted to manage both public insecurities brought on by neoliberal capitalism as well as a crisis of legitimacy. As a consequence, punitive attitudes towards criminals may represent a way of diverting public anxiety away from larger, more abstract social and economic threats (Johnson 2009). This toxic collision of anxiety, anger, and resentment is reflected in punitive and retaliatory laws and punishments (Garland 2001, Johnson 2009). All of these features of the American experience contribute to spectacular punishment practices that aim to reassure the public that something is being done to ease their anxieties (Pratt and Eriksson 2013).

Since the 1970s, The United States has experienced a loss of faith in rehabilitation and penal welfarism, increased politicization of crime, and climbing crime rates. Countless books have been written detailing the United States punitive turn. Terms such as the 'culture of control' (Garland 2001) and 'governing through crime' (Simon 2007) have become common place in criminological lexicon. Criminology is suffused with work detailing the criminology of the other, governments acting out against crime, governments "normalizing" crime control to make it part of everyday life, criminalization as social policy, social exclusion, and prisons as warehouses. Crime control and its logic have come to infuse social institutions such as the family, work, and school (Simon 2007, Lacey 2008).

Despite claiming to have the most advanced democracy in human history, the U.S. has a criminal justice system more in line with the repressive regimes we criticize (Lacey 2008, Tonry 2008). Dumortier and colleagues (2012: 111), commenting on the gulf between American and European criminal justice, observe that "in Europe we are not confronted with 'cowboy like practices' such as the CIA's secret flights, secret prisons, the open return to the use of torture, the

artificial creation of an area of non-law where prisoners assumed to be Taliban and terrorists could be mistreated and humiliated."

While European states have largely sought to 'level up' making punishment more humane over time, the US has 'leveled down' using slavery as a model and increasing the harshness of punishment (Karstedt 2010). In examining the relationship between socio-economic conditions and punitiveness, Lacey (2008) suggests that Liberal Market Economies such as the United States, characterized by individualism, light touch regulation, and less coordination, are more prone to meting out degrading and exclusionary punishment.

The United States is also known for its particularly politicized judicial and prosecutorial system. Prosecutors are generally elected in partisan elections while judges tend to be either elected or appointed. As a consequence, American prosecutors and judges are likely more swayed by political self-interest than in countries where judges and prosecutors are seen as civil servants (Tonry 2008). Elected officials, judges and prosecutors included, must constantly show they are tough on crime, which has helped to spur a race to the bottom of sorts in terms of criminal justice decency (Tonry 2008, Newburn and Jones 2005). Trust is also notably lacking in American judicial authorities (Tonry 2008, Lacey 2008).

It is also important to remain focused on the intimate relationship between social and criminal justice policy. Currie (1998:10) gets to the heart of this reality observing that "over the past twenty-five years we have tried, with increasing desperation, to use our criminal-justice system to hold together the social fabric with one hand while with our other hand, we are busily ripping it apart." Also speaking to this relationship, Hallsworth and Lea (2011) posit that the overarching state project of contemporary times is securitization which relies on three key trends: crime control as the preferred mode of social management, the criminalization of social

policy and welfare, and the outsourcing of state functions to diffused non-state actors. Similarly, Barker (2009), links the interwoven nature of social and crime policy in America to neoliberalism, observing that privatization and market solutions have become the primary response to social problems and crime feeding increased state repression.

The expansion of the criminal justice system serves two purposes, social control and an attempt to maintain state legitimacy (Wacquant 2010, Barker 2009). Both of these purposes must be understood in the context of increasing social insecurity. Ultimately, as insecurity has increased, we have witnessed the contraction of welfare in tandem with the expansion of workfare and prisonfare. These trends illustrate not the retreat of the state but rather a reshaping. Evidence for this shift includes the state shifting its energies from social and economic protection towards the managing of marginality. Wacquant (2010) describes a scene in which people are increasingly pushed into low-wage flexible labor and the criminal justice system, shifts which have underwritten the establishment of "carceral big government." These shifts are not a response to increases in crime, but rather to growing insecurity and the subsequent need to manage the marginal (Wacquant 2010). Far from the "small government" outlined by neoliberal ideology, the "…new Leviathan reveals itself to be fiercely interventionist, bossy, and pricey" (Wacquant 2010: 214).

Waquant (2010) implores us to take seriously the relationship between penal and social policy as they are undergirded by the same logics and share the goal of controlling the marginal. There is also noticeable overlap between "clients" of welfare and prison; both are disproportionately poor and minority. Both penal and social policy also serve instrumental and expressive functions. Both sets of policies tap into social anxieties experienced by the lower and middle classes, effectively helping to shift attention away from the root causes of social anxiety

and towards welfare recipients and street criminals. This process benefits from long simmering

ethnic resentment. The middle classes, suffering from subjective insecurity, face dimmed

prospects of upward mobility, intensifying competition in ways that fuel support for exclusionary

policies that shift the management of marginality from social welfare to prisons. Furthermore,

the shift from social to penal management helps to render the poor increasingly invisible,

effectively offering "…relief not *to* the poor but *from* the poor…" (Waquant 2010: 204). These

shifts help to reinforce divisions between "deserving" and "undeserving" members of society.

Responding to Crime the Norwegian Way

Norway's relatively "benign penal culture" (Loader 2012: 358) focused more on

inclusion than exclusion (Cavadino and Dignan 2006) is undergirded by the rational and

humanitarian thrusts of the Scandinavian welfare model (Bondeson 2005). Norway's

comparatively moderate response to crime is enabled by several factors. Attributes such as a

strong social welfare state and the sense of solidarity it has helped to generate and maintain, low

levels of fear of crime, comparatively high levels of trust in the state, and strong procedural

justice all contribute to relatively low levels of punitiveness in Norway. As" Lappi- Seppälä

(2012: 49) points out, "…it may be easier to express tolerance and empathy when one's own

position is secured." Speaking to Scandinavian exceptionalism in punishment, Pratt and Eriksson

(2013) observe that without underlying cohesion, stability, trust and tolerance, such responses to

crime would not be possible.

Norway's view on the etiology of crime is also key to better understanding its approach

to crime. Instead of viewing crime as largely an individual level failure, Norway has been more

apt to view crime as the result of failed integration of citizens into society (Ugelvik 2012). This

philosophy, reflective of a belief in the connection between social welfare service provision and

crime, is captured in an old Scandinavian slogan which suggests that "good social policy is the best criminal policy" (Lappi- Seppälä 2007: 274). This is in marked contrast to countries such as the United States which emphasize the rolling back of state provided welfare provisions in favor of more punitive criminal justice policies (Garland 2001, Beckett and Western 2001).

More moderate crime policies, such as those in Norway, are generated in a context where policies are drafted by expert committees that are insulated from the whims of public opinion. This tradition, started in the 19th century, reflects Norway's greater trust in experts (Pratt and Eriksson 2013). The way in which prosecutors and judges are selected also matters (Tonry 2008, Lacey 2008). Prosecutors and judges, regarded as career civil servants in Norway, tend to be more isolated from political pressure as they do not depend on the public for election and re-election (Ugelvik 2012, Pratt and Eriksson 2013).

Looking at sentencing outcomes, Norway makes use of community sanctions and fines as feasible and common alternatives to incarceration. Examples of these sanctions may include community service, treatment, and/or electronic monitoring. Fines may also be imposed. However, these fines are often proportional to the financial situation of the offender. In similar fashion to the United States, Norway has minimum and maximum penalties in the law for specific offenses prescribing a range of possible sentencing outcomes available to judges. In the 1980s, Norway abolished life sentences, setting a maximum time behind bars at 21 years (Pratt and Eriksson 2013). In contrast to the United States, Norway has banned the death penalty (Lappi- Seppälä 2007).

Compared to prison systems elsewhere, Scandinavian countries have maintained relatively low and steady incarceration rates (Lappi- Seppälä 2007). As of 2011, Norway has an incarceration rate of 78 per 100,000 persons (International Centre for Prison Studies n.d.). While

some countries have responded to prison overcrowding by building more prisons, privatization

of prisons, and waiting until overcrowding gets so severe that the courts step in, (International

Centre for Prison Studies, Page 2011). In contrast, Scandinavian countries have established

waiting lists of those sentenced to incarceration. Those on the list wait for an open cell in which

to serve their sentence (Pratt and Eriksson 2011, Johnsen and Granheim 2012).

Norwegian prisons also tend to be smaller, more open, less militarized, and less security-

oriented (Pratt and Eriksson 2011). In contrast to the trend towards warehousing prisoners and

risk management (Feeley and Simon 1992), the Scandinavian system focuses more on social

improvement and normalization to help offenders succeed after they are done serving out their

sentences. In Norway, the government has tried to create "village prisons" designed to help

"normalize" inmates and prepare them for release. The idea behind facilities of this sort is to

create environments which mimic life outside of the institution (The Norwegian Ministry of

Justice and the Police 2008).

While comparatively progressive in many respects, Scandinavian prisons throughout

history have also utilized repressive mechanisms as well, including policies such as the

following: prolonged confinement in cells, indefinite detention and medico-pychiatric power

(Pratt and Eriksson 2011). It has also been suggested that scholars from inside of Scandinavia

have been less favorable in their reviews of Scandinavian prisons than those from outside of

Scandinavia. In contrast to the focus on "Scandinavian exceptionalism" found in accounts by

authors located outside of Scandinavia, Scandinavian evaluations have focused on prisons sites

of social marginalization and "legitimized pain delivery" (Dullum and Ugelvik 2012: 1).

Furthermore, Ugelvik (2012) reminds us that low imprisonment rates are not automatically

indicative of low social control.

WHY DOES STATE TALK MATTER?

State talk represents an understudied area of criminology. In the present work, state talk is treated as a catalyst for violence and punitivenes alike. Given the noted importance of state talk in shaping media discourse, public opinion, and public policy (Mythen and Walklate 2006; Bonn 2011, Hawdon 2001, Roberts and Hough 2002), it is important to consider how governments present themselves in the face of horrific crimes. Garland (2001: 22) cautions "do not assume talk is inconsequential" asserting that official representations of crime and those who commit it (or are perceived as having committed it) have symbolic importance that shapes policy leading to real, on the ground consequences. In the aftermath of horrific events such as mass shootings, political leaders are called upon to lead national mourning, create shared understandings, and speak to common values (Amsden 2014).

Though criminologists discuss state talk in passing, we need to make it an explicit focus in our efforts to better understand the punitive turn. State talk is an important area of study for several reasons. The first is that state talk illustrates core social values such as social cohesion, cooperation, individualism, and competition that have been linked to different approaches to social problems such as crime. The second is that state talk shapes public opinion, including how citizens think that crime should be addressed. After all, the state provides guidance on how we should think and feel about social issues. Third, state talk influences policy choices in that it helps to set the parameters for the appropriate range of responses to any given issue facing society, including crime. Focusing our attention more explicitly on state talk reminds us that what people say, particularly those in positions of power, has consequences. It is imperative that sociologists of punishment study and better understand these linkages if we hope to promote more moderate responses to crime.

CONCLUSION

Literature across the social sciences has established that the United States and Norway differ economically, politically, and culturally. The confluence of cultural and institutional arrangements sets the stage for explaining why some societies experience more crime and punish crime more harshly. The United States stands in sharp contrast to Norway in both structure and culture in ways that manifest themselves in the state talk of leaders.

It is imperative that we apply these observations to real world data to better understand how societal level trends influence reactions to crime. To this end, I employ a case study approach to politically motivated mass shootings in an effort to link what we know about social factors to real world data. Such work helps us to identify and better understand incendiary and moderating factors in ways that can hopefully help us to respond to tragedy in a more measured and less destructive way.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study, seeking to better understand state talk across cultures, relies on

qualitative content analysis of commentary issued by government actors. In the broadest sense,

the present project considers how more equal societies justify and uphold a more egalitarian

social order, even in the face of horrific violence. This is an important line of inquiry in that most

criminology is concerned with incendiary responses to crime, primarily in the United States. The

ultimate aim of this work is to better understand why the American response to the Jared

Laughner case was more divisive and punitive than the Norwegian response to the Anders

Breivik case– and to think through the consequences of those differences.

The primary question underlying the present project is: how does state talk—conditioned

by economic, political, and cultural forces—facilitate or constrain punitive responses to political

mass shootings? Here, the aim is to identify and make sense of similarities and differences in the

rhetoric deployed by government actors in the United States and Norway taking into account the

socio-political and economic contexts in which these responses are embedded. This study

represents an extension of a single-case study which focused on government talk in the aftermath

of the Breivik case (Waggoner 2015), where I argued that the way in which the Norwegian

government does state talk is unique and both reflects and reinforces Norway's notably less

volatile and punitive social environment. In order to better highlight the unique tone and

substance of the Norwegian government's response to the Breivik shooting, this project includes

a second case, the Loughner Shooting in the United States. Using two cases allows us to compare and contrast state talk and the socio-political, economic, and cultural realities underlying it.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF QUALITATIVE METHODS IN CRIMINOLOGY

Criminology has a long and rich tradition of qualitative research (Travers 2013, Oliver 2013). Looking back in history, Copes (2010) notes that examples of qualitative criminology can be seen as far back as the 1800s when scholars set out to chronicle the lives of the poor in London. The early 1900s saw qualitative scholars at the University of Chicago develop what continue to be key insights into crime and justice.

Qualitative inquiry has been integral for the development and refinement of criminological theory (Jacques 2013, Tewksbury et al. 2010). Qualitative methods have helped us to better understand both offenders as well as those who seek to deter, punish, and/or rehabilitate those labeled as criminals. Wheeldon and colleagues (2014) argue that criminological theory has been oversimplified in service of large-scale statistical manipulation. Furthermore, they argue that the generation of theory and the methods needed to generate it have been underappreciated in criminology. In addition to theory building, qualitative methods are also necessary for the development and evaluation of programs and policies aimed at crime reduction (Copes 2010). Such work has been and remains necessary for moving the discipline forward.

Unfortunately, in spite of this long standing tradition, there is a disproportionate emphasis on quantitative methods in both teaching and publishing (Young 2011, Tewksbury et al. 2010, Travers 2013). According to Tewksbury and colleagues (2010), looking at 16 journals between 2004 and 2008, only 5.74% of publications in the United States were qualitative. This is compared to 27.68% percent of published articles that are qualitative published in Canadian,

British, and Australian outlets. Furthermore, in their examination of 420 dissertations across 33 institutions between 2004 and 2008, Tewksbury and colleagues (2010) note that only 52, or 12.38% were qualitative in nature.

Various explanations have been given for why qualitative methods have been underrepresented in the field. One explanation focuses on the possibility that publishing outlets receive fewer qualitative manuscripts, possibly in part due to a lack of training in PhD programs which overwhelmingly favor quantitative training. A second explanation focuses on the difficulty of getting a qualitative manuscript published in a field that rewards "objective" numbers-based research, the "quality" of which is easier to evaluate. The way in which academia is structured, with its emphasis on "productivity" for promotion and tenure, might also push researchers towards quantitative research which tends to take less time to conduct and write up (Jacques 2013, Tewksbury et al. 2010).

In response to the challenges of doing and publishing qualitative work, there have been various attempts to establish qualitative research as legitimate in its own right. Such work is necessary to ensure the production of nuanced and contextually grounded knowledge. To ensure this, teaching, funding, publishing, and the academic career game must better balance quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure that future generations of criminologists have the skills and opportunities to generate and share nuanced and detailed knowledge (Wheeldon et al. 2014). In an effort to provide a dedicated outlet for qualitative work in a field that disproportionately emphasizes quantitative methods in training, funding, and research, a group of scholars came together to create *Journal of Qualitative Criminal Justice and Criminology* (JQCJC) which made its debut in 2013 (Oliver 2013). The journal represents an important development in the field, given that qualitative research is less prevalent in criminology.

ANALYZING STATE TALK

The present study, heeding Green's (2009) call for greater attention to discourse surrounding issues of crime and justice in criminology, compares state-issued discourses surrounding two politically motivated mass shootings featured in the international media. Both cases, the January 8th shooting in Tucson, Arizona and the July 22nd shooting in Norway, were selected for comparison for several reasons. The first stems from the intended targets of the attacks, people attending political events. The second concerns perpetrator characteristics. Both Loughner and Breivik were white males with citizenship in the United States and Norway respectively. The third is the time frame in which they both occurred, 2011.

In the present moment, 24-hour news access and the internet have made it possible for state talk to travel the globe almost instantaneously (Socia and Brown 2014). The ways in which political figures speak about crime are both the outcome of culture and a reinforcement of culture, highlighting the feedback loop connecting culture and how we speak about crime (Peelo and Soothill 2011). As noted by Green (2009), criminology desperately needs more discourse-analytic research if we ever hope to make a greater impact on policy. This study highlights two very different ways of talking about traumatic criminal events by state actors.

The American Case

Government discourse released by government agencies via the internet make up the data collected for the American case. These statements represent the official image that the United States wishes to portray. Given that the United States is used as the pre-eminent example of a neoliberal, highly individualized, and punitive penal system, it is important to ascertain whether or not state talk in the wake of the Loughner case fits this common criminological narrative. In light of literature in this vein, it is expected that the English language statements made by

government officials evidence a greater emphasis on facilitating rather than constraining language. By facilitating language, I refer to incendiary language reflective of themes derived from the literature on variations in punitiveness across cultures. Examples include the following: distrust and lack of confidence in the government or society (Snacken 2010), social division (Lappi- Seppälä 2007; Ugelvik 2012), and fear and risk (Snacken 2010). Conversely, constraining language illustrates themes such as these: trust and confidence in government (Snacken 2010), social solidarity indicating a "we are all in this together" approach (Lappi-Seppälä 2007; Simon 2007; Ugelvik 2012), and working to overcome fear (Snacken 2010).

To replicate what was done with the Norwegian case (Waggoner 2015), an internet search was performed to locate the websites of government bodies and agencies in the United States who might have commented on the 2011 shooting. Starting with the official webpage of the White House, I located a list of all of the government agencies represented in the presidential cabinet. I also searched for a list of Arizona representatives and senators to the United States Congress who were in office when Giffords and her constituents were shot. Key search terms included "Giffords" and "Loughner". The time span from which data are drawn is from January 2011 to June 2015. A total of 98 documents resulting from the search are included in the present study. The included documents represent all the documents found that explicitly referred to the attacks found using the project search terms. Duplicate documents, pictures, and videos were excluded.

Table 1.	Frequency of Government Agency Speaking About January 8th Attacks (United States)

Government Agency	Frequency	Percent
White House	41	41.83
U.S. Congress (Arizona)	28	28.57
Department of Justice *Department of Justice* *Federal Bureau of Investigation* *Homeland Security*	20 *11* *7* *2*	22.40
Department of State	5	5.1
Department of Defense	1	1.02
Department of the Interior	1	1.02
Department of Labor	1	1.02
Department of Health and Human Services	1	1.02

The Norwegian Case

An earlier version of the Norwegian case (Waggoner 2015) serves as the foundation for the present work. Commentary released by government agencies in English was specifically sought as the choice to publish in English hints at the intention to share information with audiences beyond those who speak Norwegian. These English language statements represent the image that Norway wishes to portray to the world. Given the identification of Norway as a relatively benign penal system (Loader 2010), it is important to ascertain whether or not government talk in the wake of the Breivik case shows evidence of adherence or resistance to this identity. In light of the literature on Scandinavian exceptionalism and claims by the international media that the Norwegian government has emphasized adherence to pillars of Norwegian culture, it was expected that the English language statements made by government officials would evidence a greater emphasis on constraining rather than facilitating language.

An internet search was performed to locate the websites of government bodies and agencies in Norway who might have commented on the 2011 shooting and bombing in Norway. To begin, the English language version of the Norwegian government's online portal to specific government cabinets was accessed. A search was performed using the main government portal website in an effort to locate documents. Key terms included the following: "Anders Behring Breivik," "terrorism," and "Utøya." Within each individual agency website, the icons "news," "speeches and articles," and "press releases" were clicked to examine results organized by date. The time span from which data were drawn is July 2011 to September 2015. Searches of websites for courts, police, and corrections were also performed, although they uncovered no sources in English. A total of 68 documents resulting from the search are included in the present study. These documents represent all the documents found that explicitly referred to the attacks using the project search terms. Duplicates were excluded (Waggoner 2015).

Table 2.	Frequency of Government Agency Speaking About July 22nd Attacks (Norway)

Government Agency	Frequency	Percent
Office of the Prime Minister	27	39.70
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	12	17.64
Ministry of Government Administration, Reform, and Church Affairs	4	5.88
22 July Commission	3	4.41
Ministry of Culture	3	4.41
Ministry of Justice and Public Security	2	2.94
Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development/Modernisation	11	16.17
Royal Family	2	2.94
Governmental Portal	1	1.47
Ministry of Labour	1	1.47
Ministry of Education and Research	1	1.47
Ministry of Defense	1	1.47

METHOD: QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

Qualitative research, an umbrella term for a wide variety of methods, seeks to gain a deeper, richer, and more nuanced understanding of social phenomenon. As noted by Altheide (2000: 290), "…the main emphasis is on discovery and description, including the search for underlying meanings, patterns, and processes…" Here, the focus is applying qualitative methods to the analysis of state issued documents to advance the understanding of the content and impact of state talk on responding to crime.

A variety of terms have been used to describe the qualitative analysis of documents. Examples include qualitative media analysis (Altheide 1996), ethnographic content analysis (Altheide 1996), discourse analysis (Tonkiss 2004), qualitative text analysis (Peräkylä 2000), and

qualitative content analysis (Tewksbury 2009, Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, Schreier 2014).

Here, I rely on the general term qualitative content analysis to describe the method underlying

the current analysis of state talk.

Content analysis is one of the most commonly used research methods. Though it is often

thought of as a quantitative method, content analysis has also been utilized as a qualitative

method (Tewksbury 2009). According to Zhang and Wildemuth (2009), qualitative content

analysis differs from its quantitative counterpart in that it goes beyond merely counting words

under the guise of objectivity. In qualitative content analysis, the aim is to identify and better

understand meanings, themes, and patterns in a given set of texts. Schreier (2014) describes

qualitative content analysis as a flexible and systematic way of reducing data. Qualitative content

analysis also works to help verify theoretical relationships (Altheide 1996). This point is

important in the current project as the aim here is to apply pre-existing themes in criminological

literature on punitive responses to crime to state talk on mass atrocities as a way to bridge the

gap between criminological concepts and data. As noted by Altheide (1996: 17), qualitative

content analysis exists to help "…to check and supplement as well as supplant prior theoretical

claims." The present study focuses primarily on checking and supplementing prior theoretical

claims. The study of documents helps to better understand the significance of symbols and

meanings and the cultures that they reflect (Altheide 1996).

Speaking to "doing" qualitative content analysis, Tonkiss (2004: 378) asserts that it is

"…an interpretive process that relies on close study of specific texts, and therefore does not lend

itself to hard-and-fast 'rules' of method." Similarly, Altheide (1996) concludes that there has

been little formal guidance for how to conduct qualitative content analysis, a point made obvious

to him through teaching. Likewise, Peräkylä (2000: 870) argues that "in many cases, qualitative

researchers who use written texts as their materials do not try to follow any predefined protocol in executing their analysis." As such, there is no fixed set of rules guiding the method.

Despite a lack of a solid, established set of rules guiding qualitative content analysis, a common starting point is the identification of recurrent and significant themes through the process of reading and rereading empirical materials (Peräkylä 2000, Tonkiss 2004). Conversely, the identification of patterns of variation is also central to qualitative content analysis (Tonkiss 2004). Using the overarching themes derived from the text in the reading-rereading process, the researcher works "…to draw a picture of the presuppositions and meanings that constitute the cultural world of which the textual material is a specimen" (Peräkylä 2000: 870).

In the present project, coding and analysis were informed, though not wholly guided, by literatures on fear of crime, trust, and social solidarity as they relate to punitiveness. Though criminological literature has had much to say about issues such as trust, social solidarity, and fear as they relate to societal reaction to crime, there has been limited application of these themes to qualitative data such as state talk. The present study seeks to bridge the connection between criminological literature and real world data.

Here the aim is, through qualitative content analysis, to generate a richer and deeper understanding of the ways that we communicate about crime using themes identified as relevant in previous literature. Such applied work is important in advancing our understanding of the cultural factors that underlie responses to crime. More broadly, such work is valuable in helping to advance ideas on how to temper the so-called punitive turn.

CODING AND ANALYSIS

There is no single way to code and analyze data using qualitative content analysis. However, Altheide (1996) emphasizes the need for researcher reflexivity and interaction between the researcher and the data in a recursive process moving between concept development, data collection, coding, and analysis. Ultimately, the process is non-linear as to allow for constant discovery (Altheide 1996). Similarly, Schreier (2014) describes qualitative content analysis as an iterative process requiring the researcher to read the data, develop a preliminary codebook, re-read the data, and re-develop the codebook.

The present analysis, using state talk as a barometer for narratives about crime, identifies and expands on themes derived from the data. The identification and subsequent analysis of these themes was informed by the literature on punitiveness. As a consequence, the themes and sub-themes analyzed in this study were, in part derived a priori. Documents were examined for evidence of factors thought to act as either constraints or facilitators of punitiveness. To begin, a sample of ten documents was selected to design the project codebook. According to Schreier (2014) the development of the codebook is a key step in qualitative content analysis. Next, in a course structured as a writing workshop, two fellow students analyzed the initial sample of documents using my preliminary code book. Their observations helped to clarify the themes underlying the present project. Feedback from anonymous journal reviewers also helped to refine the themes and analysis presented in a recent article (Waggoner 2015).

With regards to possible constraints on punitiveness, the documents were analyzed for the following themes derived from the literature: trust and confidence in government (Snacken 2010), social solidarity indicating a "we are all in this together" approach (Lappi- Seppälä 2007; Simon 2007; Ugelvik 2012), and working to overcome fear (Snacken 2010). Likewise, factors

thought to facilitate punitiveness were also derived from the literature, including the following: distrust and lack of confidence in the government or society (Snacken 2010), social division (Lappi- Seppälä 2007; Ugelvik 2012), and fear and risk (Snacken 2010).

Qualitative results and analysis in the next section are broken into two sections, constraints and facilitators. Constraints such as trust and confidence in the government, social cohesion and inclusiveness, and resisting fear have been linked to more moderate responses, while facilitators such as distrust and lack of confidence in the government, social division, and fear and risk have been linked to more punitive responses. State talk, given its impact on media coverage and public perception, provides a way for us to better understand how the way in which we respond to crimes such as mass shootings both reflect and reproduce the social context in which they are embedded.

CONCLUSION

Qualitative Content Analysis of documents issued through government portals allows us to deepen our understanding of state talk. However, as with any research endeavor, there are inherent limitations and strengths of the methods employed and the data analyzed. Speaking to the limitations inherent in interpretive research, other researchers, given the same data set, might find different themes or disagree with the conclusions I have come to. Speaking to this possibility, noting the importance of better understanding discourse, particularly between cultures, Green (2009: 145) writes that "this is an inevitable but worthwhile risk in this sort of study." It is in the spirit of this observation that I approach the relationship between state talk, socio-economic, political, and cultural underpinnings, and outcomes following high profile politically motivated mass shootings.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

How does state talk—conditioned by economic, political, and cultural forces—facilitate

or constrain punitive responses to political mass shootings? The present work outlines the ways

in which state talk deployed by political elites in the United States and Norway following

politically motivated mass shootings overlap and differ. To this end, I use themes derived from

the literature on possible constraints (trust in the state, solidarity, and resisting fear) and

facilitators (distrust in the state, social division, and fear) on punitiveness. To begin, I provide a

brief overview of both cases. I follow with a presentation of each major thematic category:

constraints and facilitators on punitiveness. Embedded in each of these major thematic categories

are three subthemes and an overarching discussion of the similarities and differences between

cases.

OVERVIEW OF THEME FREQUENCY

Tables 3 and 4 summarize the frequency and overall percent of each major theme

(constraints and facilitators) as well as each sub-theme embedded within each of those major

themes. Tables are broken down by country.

Table 3.   Thematic Frequency (United States)

Theme	Frequency	Percent
Constraints	108	66
Facilitators	56	34
Trust and Confidence in Government	34	21
Social Cohesion and Inclusion	37	22
Overcoming and Resisting Fear	37	22
Distrust and Lack of Confidence in Government	13	8
Social Division	10	6
Fear and Risk	33	20

Table 4.   Thematic Frequency (Norway)

Theme	Frequency	Percent
Constraints	111	83
Facilitators	22	17
Trust and Confidence in Government	34	26
Social Cohesion and Inclusion	55	41
Overcoming and Resisting Fear	22	17
Distrust and Lack of Confidence in Government	4	3
Lack of Cohesion	7	5
Fear and Risk	11	8

JANUARY 8, 2011

On January 8th 2011, several days after being sworn in for her third term in congress, Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ), held her third "Congress on your Corner" political event to meet with constituents. The event was interrupted by twenty-two year old Jared Loughner who killed six people and wounded another thirteen at the Tucson, Arizona community event (Benson 2011, Joslyn and Haider-Markel, 2013. Cortese 2012, Boser and Lake 2014). U.S. District Court Judge John Roll was killed in the attack while Giffords, the primary target, was severely wounded in the attack (Joslyn and Haider-Markel 2013). A child, nine-year old Christina Taylor-Green also died in the shooting (Cortese 2012).

Loughner's first shot, aimed directly at Giffords, hit her point blank in the head (Marion and Willard 2014). The weapon, a Glock semi-automatic handgun with an extended magazine, was legally purchased and lawfully concealed (Benson 2012, Bishop 2012). The law that would have prevented the legal sale of extended clips, the Violent Crime and Law Enforcement Act, expired in 2004. Arizona, a state with notoriously lax gun laws, does not require a permit, special training, or background check to conceal carry (Zoellner 2011). Armed with 90 rounds of ammunition in four magazines, Loughner was able to fire off 31 rounds in the span of approximately 30 seconds (Boser and Lake 2014, Marion and Willard 2014). Every bullet fired by Loughner hit someone in the crowd (Marion and Willard 2014). While Loughner was reloading his weapon, he dropped a magazine, which gave the crowd an opportunity to get the magazine away from him and subdue him using a chair as he tried to run away. Several people held Loughner down while they waited for police. Adding to the chaos, an armed patron of the grocery store where the event was held nearly shot an innocent bystander in the confusion

(Zoellner 2011). Early media coverage mistakenly reported that Giffords had been killed in the

attack (Marion and Willard 2014).

Jared Loughner, the shooter, had a history of mental illness with teachers, classmates, and

others who knew him reporting classroom disruption, erratic yelling, and claims that he heard

voices. In 2010, Loughner was suspended from school. On social media, Loughner made

incoherent posts in which he claimed that the government was brainwashing Americans as well.

He also made a point to post pictures of himself handling guns (Marion and Willard 2014).

Police, searching the Loughner family home, discovered a number of handwritten notes outlining

Loughner's intent to shoot Giffords. The investigation also turned up a letter from Gifford's

thanking Loughner for attending a 2007 event (Marion and Willard 2014). Hamm (2013: 2)

notes that Loughner

> …posted YouTube videos before the incident, in which he railed against the government,
> in which he burned flags; in one he even provides his own definition of terrorism. And he
> then exchanged letters with the Congresswoman, so she knew who he was. The letters
> went back and forth. His high school-his college classmates knew that he had very deep-
> seated anger about the Congresswoman. So this was not in isolation, he was broadcasting
> his intent to commit violence.

The day after the shooting, Federal prosecutors filed charges including: five counts of

killing federal government employees, attempts to kill government employees, the attempted

assassination of a member of congress and the assassination of a federal judge. He pled "not

guilty" to 49 counts (Marrion and Willard 2014). Loughner was diagnosed with paranoid

schizophrenia and as a result was forcibly medicated. Deemed competent to stand trial by a

federal judge, Loughner plead guilty and was sentenced to seven consecutive life terms in prison,

most likely to be served in a federal prison psychiatric ward, coupled with 140 years without the

possibility of parole. Present at the trial were victims and family members. The Pima County

prosecutor's office considered pursuing the death penalty (Cortese 2012).

The shooting rapidly incited a media spectacle. Reporters speculated on the circumstances of the shootings, characteristics of the shooter and his victims, and possible motives for the atrocity (Gruenewald et al. 2013). News agencies across the globe covered the story lamenting America's violence problem. Shortly after the atrocity, a French friend from my time studying in Oslo, sent me a link to a French publication with a headline roughly translating to "Tucson: Capital of Intolerance." Altheide and Johnson (2011), writing on the attacks, note that the "intolerance" claim was widespread in the days following the attacks.

JULY 22, 2011

On July 22, 2011, Anders Behring Breivik killed 8 people and injured 200 more in a car bombing near the government quarter in Oslo. Several buildings, including the office of the Prime Minster, were destroyed in the blast. Later that day, on nearby Utøya Island, Breivik gained access to a Labour Party youth camp by impersonating a police officer. Here, Breivik shot and killed an additional 69 people, many of them children (Appleton 2014).

The twin attacks orchestrated by Breivik represent the largest act of terrorism in Norwegian history (Egge et al. 2012; Wollebæk et al. 2012; Carle 2013). Shortly before the attacks, Breivik published a lengthy manifesto on the internet detailing his animosity towards multi-culturalism, immigrants, and Muslims. Breivik claimed that the attacks were designed to punish the government for its embrace of multiculturalism. Contrary to Breivik's claims that he was affiliated with other right-wing and anti-immigrant groups, officials believe that he planned and executed the attacks alone (Spaaji 2012, Appelton 2014).

The suspect, Anders Breivik, was arrested on the evening of July 22nd. Immediately, he confessed to carrying out both atrocities. He told investigators he planned and executed the attacks to save Western Europe from what he sees as a Muslim takeover. Furthermore, he

deliberately targeted the government quarter and a Labour Party Youth Camp to extract revenge against the Labour party, which he accused of failing the Norwegian people (Syse 2014). According to Syse (2014: 390), "Breivik was charged with violating paragraph 147a of the Norwegian criminal code, for 'destabilizing or destroying basic functions of society' and 'creating serious fear in the population,' both of which are acts of terrorism under Norwegian criminal law." Declared sane, Breivik was found guilty of mass murder and sentenced to 21 years in prison, which represents Norway's maximum allowable sentence (Syse 2014, Appleton 2014). In the event that he is considered a danger to society after serving his initial sentence, incarceration can be extended at five year intervals (Appleton 2014).

The unexpected and unprecedented attacks shocked and horrified both Norway and the world, calling into question Norway's image as a relatively safe and peaceful country (Kellner 2012; Christensen et al. 2013). Prior to July 22nd, Norwegians had relatively limited experience with political violence. The attacks on Oslo and Utøya are widely regarded as the most devastating event in Norway since Nazi occupation during the Second World War (Appleton 2014). International media sources praised Norwegian officials and citizens alike for their calm, collected response to the attacks. The Norwegian response was often contrasted to that of the United States who is world renowned for responding to violence with harshness and bickering (Greenwald 2011).

CONSTRAINTS

Criminological literature has emphasized several themes thought to constrain punitive responses to crimes. Here, the aim is to put literature to data. More specifically, I apply those themes to a data set comprised of statements from state officials. The first theme in the present study pertains to trust and confidence in the government by citizens (Snacken 2010). The second

theme, social solidarity, has also been established as an important factor in how countries respond to crime, in this case headline grabbing politically motivated mass shootings (Lappi-Seppälä 2007, Simon 2007, and Ugelvik 2012. The third theme references the importance of working to overcome fear, as fear tends to correlate with punitive responses to crime (Snacken 2010). These three themes manifest differently in the American and Norwegian samples, both reflecting and reinforcing broader cultural arrangements.

TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN THE STATE

Trust in the state is a key component of better understanding divergent reactions to crime across cultures. Factors such as strong universal social supports and consensual political cultures help to bolster this trust (Jensen and Tinggard Svendsen 2011, Green 2009). Scholarship examining trust in the state links state legitimacy to responses to crime. In places where trust in the state is high, crime talk and political posturing tends to be milder and less prevalent than in places where state legitimacy is low (Lappi- Seppälä 2012). Speaking to practice, Green (2009) observes that punishment tends to be less punitive where state legitimacy is higher.

Trust and Confidence in the United States

The idea that trust and confidence in the government by citizens shapes reactions to crime has a lineage in criminological literature. High levels of trust and confidence in the government have been identified as important societal attributes that may help to constrain punitive responses to crime (Amna et al. 2007, Lappi- Seppälä 2007, and Snacken 2010). It is worth noting that in the American case, particularly in contrast to the Norwegian case, references to the importance of trust and confidence in the government are in comparatively short supply. It is also important to note the difference in content and tone between the United States and Norway on this matter.

Few American actors throughout the sample made reference to the importance of trusting

the government in the aftermath of the January 8th attacks. In the few cases where trust in

government and the need to remain loyal to the American style of democracy were mentioned,

the emphasis was overwhelmingly on the need to continue to exercise the constitutional right to

peaceably assemble. For instance, a Senate Resolution asserts:

> Resolved, That the Senate--…(7) reaffirms the bedrock principle of American democracy
> and representative government which is memorialized in the First Amendment of the
> Constitution and which Representative Gabrielle Giffords herself read in the Hall of the
> House of Representatives on January 6, 2011, of 'the right of the people peaceably to
> assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances;' (8) stands firm in
> its belief in a democracy in which all can participate and in which all intimidation and
> threats of violence cannot silence the voices of any American;…" (McCain 2011b).

Also speaking to the importance of congress meeting with their constituents, Arizona

Representative Paul Gossar (2011a) asserts the following:

> Let me add further: the acts of a criminal will not stop us from meeting our people. We
> will not be deterred, we will not be intimidated and we will not abandon the people of
> Arizona because of the murderous acts of a deranged killer.

> In both of these examples, members of Congress assert both the importance of meeting

with constituents as well as a refusal to be intimidated by those who seek to undermine peaceable

assembly. Giffords is held up by her political peers as an exemplar of these two points and

frequently commended for her service to her community and Nation.

> President Barrack Obama (White House 2011b), also weighing in, paints the contentious

debates between competing factions as a key component of American democracy observing that

> It's no secret that those of us here tonight have had our differences over the last two
> years. The debates have been contentious; we have fought fiercely for our beliefs. And
> that's a good thing. That's what a robust democracy demands. That's what helps set us
> apart as a nation."
> Speaking again to the fierce partisanship in American politics, Obama (White House

2011c) states the following: "so as business resumes, I look forward to working together in that

same spirit of common cause with members of Congress from both parties—because before we are Democrats or Republicans, we are Americans." In both statements, President Obama expresses faith that American political players, regardless of party affiliation, will be capable of coming together for the greater good in response to gun violence.

Trust and Confidence the Norwegian Way

One of the most prevalent themes in the Norwegian sample is trust and confidence in the government by citizens. Although merely talking about trust does not necessarily correlate with actual trust, it is important to consider how officials present themselves as trustworthy or not trustworthy to their constituents. References to high levels of trust and confidence were made frequently throughout the documents by a range of actors. This finding is in line with what others have found. Fimreite and colleagues (2013: 850) draw a link between state talk and trust when they argue that "the statements and speeches of the nation's leaders directly after the attacks and the following demonstrations helped to raise awareness in Norway that terror seeks to destroy trust."

A variety of statements issued by the government both drew upon and reinforced Norway's reputation as a "state friendly" society (Fimreite et al. 2013). For instance, Minister of Justice and Public Safety Knut Storberget (Ministry of Justice and the Police 2011a) acknowledged the importance of trust and its role in fostering feelings of safety stating:

> …we are dependent on the public's trust. Trust is essential for thriving societies, for civil and economic life. Trust in the police is essential. Such trust means that people feel there is safety for persons and property. Transparency is a key instrument in building trust in the police.

In an op-ed, Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre connects faith in democracy to the importance of dialogue by emphasizing "that the open public square can be an impressive

antidote to extremism should not be surprising… Open debate is our strongest tool in standing up

to extremism" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012).

Government officials have also called upon Norwegians to resist seeing Breivik as an

exception. Støre (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012), pointing to the importance of adhering to

and remaining faithful to Norwegian democracy and justice, stated that:

> … it is a mistake to treat crimes committed by extremists as exceptions, subject to special
> processes. They must be held accountable in accordance with and to the full extent of the
> law. Hiding suspects from public view merely dehumanizes the perpetrators and
> undermines any moral or judicial lessons.
> Addressing the reaction of Norwegian's, particularly young Norwegians, to the tragedy,

Støre (Ministery of Foreign Affairs 2012), marvels that

> It has been remarkable to observe that the younger generation of Norwegiens — and
> especially the young survivors of the island massacre — have expressed their trust in
> Norway's open approach to dealing with the affair. They know that a political system
> based on the rule of law cannot turn its back on its standard procedures on an ad hoc
> basis; that doing so would only provide extremists with evidence of the supposed double
> standards of democracy.

Also weighing in, Minister of Defense Roger Ingebrigste (Ministry of Defense 2011)

states

> I do think, and many observers at home and abroad have argued, that our society has not
> lost its ways. We must apply the mechanisms of rule of law and use our existing
> institutions to manage also situations such as this. Despite the heinous crime committed,
> the perpetrator has a right to a best possible defense, a right to try his case in a court of
> law. He should be tried within the boundaries of the law; we should not be tempted to go
> beyond that. New laws must not be tailored to fit particular purposes
> Speaking to the public and political realms,

Støre also asserts "Neither politicians nor the media turned it into a partisan political

issue. The public reacted with grief but did not call for extraordinary measures. And the state

chose to prosecute Brevik in an ordinary public court with full media coverage." (Ministry of

Foreign Affairs 2012). Roger Ingebrigste (Ministry of Defense 2011) also weighs in stating "The

political cohesion is also considerable in times of crisis, both within the respective political

parties' unity and within the Norwegian political culture as such." Statements such as these highlight the belief that both politicians and the public coped in ways aligned with Norway's value system thus helping to maintain its reputation as a moderate and cooperative society.

In what appeared to be an effort to foster trust in the aftermath of the attacks, the government formed an independent 22 July Commission. The report issued by the Commission stresses the importance of respecting Breivik's due process rights stating "…the Commission has not taken a position on the question of the accused's guilt in the criminal sense." Statements such as these illustrate government actors' attempts to uphold Norwegian principles such as trust in the state, adherence to due process, and resistance to exceptionalism in the face of unprecedented tragedy.

Discussion

The way in which political elites illustrate and call for trust in the state differs between the United States and Norway. In the American case, speakers focus heavily on two main points, (1) the belief that political disagreement is a sign of a robust democracy and (2) overcoming partisan differences. Time and again, political elites attempt to convey to the American people that the United States is a beacon of democracy and that partisan competition does not undermine the efficacy of the state. Furthermore, they assert that rather being a sign of dysfunction, America's contentious political arena is in fact a positive feature of democracy. American speakers also reiterated the importance of the constitutional right to peaceable assembly and the importance of government officials meeting with their constituents. Speakers across the aisle frequently commended Gifford's dedication to public engagement. Gifford's continued her dedication to this tenant of democracy even in the face of attacks on her office,

people bringing guns to her events, and vitriolic comments directed at her by other political figures.

In contrast, Norwegian political speakers reinforce the idea of Norway as a "state friendly" (Fimreite et al. 2013) society. Officials directly and repeatedly emphasized the importance of maintaining the public's trust in the state, the need for continued transparency, and the power of open dialogue as an antidote to extremism, especially in the face of horrific events such as mass shootings. Norwegian officials also reaffirmed the importance of trusting in Norwegian democracy and refusing to treat Breivik, the perpetrator, as an exception to the rules. They argue that to treat crime, particularly horrific acts of violence, as an exception fuels extremism and erodes democracy in ways that compromise Norwegian culture and security. This approach to the attacks indicates a strong desire on behalf of the state to maintain Norway's global reputation as an open, inclusive, and transparent exemplar of democracy.

The results here, focused on talking about trust by politicians, comport with what others studying the Breivik case have found regarding trust in the state and its agents. Looking at trust in the police both before and after July 22nd, Egge and colleagues (2012) note stability in the percentage of those polled who express trust in the police. Support ranged from 83% to 91% with a rating of 87% in 2012. Findings such as these suggest that citizen trust in the police did not plummet in the year following the attack. These public opinion data link to claims by the Minister of Justice and Public Safety who emphasized the importance of trust in the police in the aftermath of the attacks. Using another public opinion data set, Wollebæk and colleagues (2012: 35) also found continued high ratings of trust in the police that they call "…remarkable in light of…the increasingly outspoken criticism of the police during the attacks." Visser and colleagues

(2013) posit that a strong tradition of procedural justice helps to maintain Norway's comparatively high level of trust in the state.

SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

Social solidarity, speaking to a sense of cohesion, inclusiveness, and trust in fellow citizens, focuses on the need for shared responsibility as well as the ability to work together to establish and maintain solidarity. These societal attributes are noted as important constraints on punitiveness by criminologists (Cavadino and Dignan 2006; Lappi- Seppälä 2007; Pratt 2007). High levels of trust in one's fellow citizens' correlates with a strong welfare state, low levels of fear, equality, and lower levels of puntiveness. Conversely, where social supports are weak, people are fearful, inequality is rampant, and there is a strong drive towards punishment, solidarity tends to be weak (Lappi- Seppälä 2008). Although talking about solidarity does not always neatly correlate with solidarity, it is telling how political elites across societies approach the issue in ways that reflect and help to reproduce history, culture, and institutional arrangements in a given society.

Solidarity American Style

The majority of references to solidarity in the U.S. sample focus on the need to keep the victims and their families in the nation's thoughts and prayers. Actors on both sides of the political aisle and across branches of government favored this strategy. Citizens were immediately implored by political leaders to think and pray on behalf of the victims. On the day of the shootings, Obama (White House 2011d) asserted that:

> What Americans do at times of tragedy is to come together and support each other. So at this time I ask all Americans to join me and Michelle in keeping all the victims and their families, including Gabby, in our thoughts and prayers.

On January 10th, Obama (White House 2011e) reaffirmed the importance of thoughts and

prayers in bringing the country together stating:

> And so, in the coming days we're going to have a lot of time to reflect. Right now, the
> main thing we're doing is to offer our thoughts and prayers to those who've been
> impacted, making sure that we're joining together and pulling together as a country."

In his speech to grieving Arizonian's, Obama (White House 2011a) ended with "May

God bless and keep those we've lost in restful and eternal peace. May He love and watch over

the survivors. And may He bless the United States of America."

Arizona Senator John McCain (2011a) also emphasized the power of prayer as a response

to national tragedy stating:

> I pray for Gabby and the other victims, and for the repose of the souls of the dead and
> comfort for their families. I beg our loving Creator to spare the lives of those who are still
> alive, heal them in body and spirit, and return them to their loved ones."

Throughout the American sample, calls for prayer are present in nearly every statement,

making it one of the most prevalent themes. Often, prayer and other references to religion occur

multiple times in a single document emphasizing the speaker's insistence that Americans pray

for the fallen and their families.

President Obama, addressing mourners in Arizona, also emphasized solidarity among the

American people more broadly. For instance, he observes "And I believe that for all our

imperfections, we are full of decency and goodness, and that the forces that divide us are not as

strong as those that unite us" (White House 2011a). In this statement, although he acknowledges

the divisive nature of American social life, he expresses hope that Americans can overcome their

differences and get along peacefully. Obama (White House 2011a) also makes reference to the

importance of caring for one another by stating:

> We should be civil because we want to live up to the example of public servants like John
> Roll and Gabby Giffords, who knew first and foremost that we are all Americans, and

that we can question each other's ideas without questioning each other's love of country and that our task, working together to constantly widen the circle of our concern so that we can bequeath the American Dream to future generations.

Here, Obama reminds Americans that they are all part of the same group and that it is both possible and imperative to care for one another, again speaking to solidarity with each other more broadly. He goes so far as to link solidarity with each other to the continuation of the mythical American Dream, a key feature of American socio-economic cultural life.

The First Lady, Michelle Obama (White House 2011f), also spoke to the importance of solidarity among Americans when she observed that:

> We can teach our children that here in America, we embrace each other, and support each other, in times of crisis. And we can help them do that in their own small way—whether it's by sending a letter, or saying a prayer, or just keeping the victims and their families in their thoughts. We can teach them the value of tolerance—the practice of assuming the best, rather than the worst, about those around us. We can teach them to give other the benefit of the doubt, particularly those with whom they disagree.

Social Cohesion and Inclusiveness Norwegian Style

The most prominent theme in the Norwegian sample, social cohesion and inclusiveness, focuses on the need to share responsibility and work together to establish and maintain solidarity. Strong feelings of social solidarity, inclusion, and shared responsibility, noted as important constraints on punitiveness by scholars (Cavadino and Dignan 2006; Lappi- Seppälä 2007; Pratt 2007), were all present in the documents analyzed here.

Throughout the documents, government actors emphasized the importance of solidarity in the face of great suffering. For instance, Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime Minister 2012b) linking trust and solidarity, two interrelated concepts, notes

> We could have retreated into our homes in fear. And barricaded ourselves behind a wall of mistrust. Instead we turned to each other and built bridges of trust. That was our spontaneous response to the violence last summer. We made the right choice.

Here, the Prime Minister uses the word "spontaneous" to emphasize Norway's global reputation for trust and social solidarity, evidenced by the country's long commitment to maintaining a strong social welfare state. Norway is often proffered by the media, scholars, and international organizations such as the United Nations as a model for other countries.

The Secretary of State Roger Ingebrigtse (Ministry of Defense 2011) links facilitators of solidarity identified in the Scandinavian exceptionalism literature (e.g. Pratt and Eriksson 2013) to the Norwegian response to the Breivik case stating that:

> Norway has certain added advantages, given its small size and cohesion. That cohesion is apparent at the national level. We remain a small homogeneous country, counting less than 5 million people, with a common heritage and a strong sense of unity.

Prime Minister Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime Minister 2012c), speaking to the ability of the welfare state to prevent terrorism, has called for work to be done to "…counter radicalization and violence in a number of different arenas: in an inclusive school system, in dialogue between religions in an atmosphere of mutual trust, and in tireless efforts to prevent the marginalization of individuals in society." These points draw upon and reinforce the importance of inclusion and solidarity in Norwegian society. They also links Norway's comparatively collective social orientation to the prevention of violence.

Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime Minister 2011a) also asserts that "We must invite in those who have gone astray. We must oppose those who want to use violence. We must meet them with all the arms of democracy. We must meet them everywhere." Further stressing the importance of collective action in violence prevention, Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime Minister 2011a) also called upon Norwegians to come together to make "…an unbreakable chain of solidarity, democracy, safety, and security." Time and again Stoltenberg emphasizes the relationship between solidarity and security.

Discussion

Expressions of social solidarity in the American case center largely on keeping victims and their families in the nation's thoughts and prayers. These calls were made often by leaders across the political aisle illustrating the ubiquitous nature of religious appeals to unite the nation and support the victims in a time of suffering. At times, speakers made multiple calls for prayer in the same statement. Speaking to broader calls for social solidarity, President Obama and the First Lady Michelle Obama implore their fellow American's to embrace each other, overcome differences, see the best in one another, and be there for each other. They argue that it is important to show children how to support one another in times of tragedy to ensure the intergenerational transmission of solidarity which they link to the American Dream, a core feature of life in the United States.

In the Norwegian case, political elites emphasize the importance of trust in each other, even in the face of great suffering. The Prime Minister, Jens Stoltenberg, commended his fellow Norwegians for resisting the urge to distrust each other. The Minister of Defense, also speaking to solidarity and trust, links Norway's reaction to the July 22nd attacks to being a small, relatively homogenous country with a strong emphasis on unity. Social solidarity is also proffered as a preventative solution to extremism with officials calling for inclusion. In line with the findings here, using public opinion data, Wollebæk and colleagues (2012) found that 79% of respondents reported a strong sense of community in the aftermath of the attacks. Norway's strong efforts to build social cohesion and inclusion through social welfare and shared responsibility, both before and after the attacks, may help to mitigate punitive sentiments and actions as well as help to prevent future acts of violence.

OVERCOMING FEAR

Fear of crime can be politically advantageous, particularly in highly neoliberal countries

such as the United States (Sparks 2006). Less discussed, however, are places such as Norway

where there is less political incentive to capitalize on citizen's fear of crime (Green 2009).

Scholars such as Lappi- Seppälä (2012) suggest a relationship between welfare state strength and

fear of crime. Where the welfare state is strong, people tend to be less fearful of crime. Where

there is less fear, reactions to crime may be less volatile and harsh.

Overcoming Fear: Individual American Heroes

Another key theme emerging from the criminological literature on punitiveness in social

and crime policy is that societies where citizens are more afraid tend to breed more punitive

responses to crime. In such societies, political elites are more able to capitalize on fear turning it

into harsh policy in the ever-present competition between politicians in a winner take all system

(Beckett 1997). American political calls to resist fear do not urge the American people as a

whole to remain calm and avoid rash action, but rather focus on the individual heroes present at

any given mass shooting, including the one perpetrated by Loughner. This emphasis comports

with America's global reputation for being a highly individualistic society.

Political statements following the shootings were peppered with references to individual

displays of heroism by victims. For instance, President Obama (White House 2011e),

commended the bravery of a young congressional staffer:

> I think it's important for us to also focus, though, on the extraordinary courage that was
> shown during the course of these events: a 20-year-old college student who ran into the
> line of fire to rescues his boss; a wounded woman who helped secure the ammunition that
> might have caused even more damage; the citizens who wrestled down the gunman. Part
> of what I think that this speaks to is the best of America, even in the face of such
> mindless violence.

Speaking to a grieving crowd in Arizona, Obama (White House 2011a) pays homage to the courage of victims stating:

> And Daniel, I'm sorry, you may deny it, but we've decided you are a hero because you ran through the chaos to minister to your boss and tend to her wounds and helped keep her alive. We are grateful to the men who tackled the gunman as he stopped to reload. Right over there. We are grateful for petite Patricia Maisch, who wrestled away the killer's ammunition, and doubly saved some lives… These men and women remind us that heroism is found not only on the fields of battle. They remind us that heroism does not require special training of physical strength. Heroism is here, in the hearts of so many of our fellow citizens, all around us, just waiting to be summoned—as it was on Saturday morning.

In a resolution following the tragedy, the Senate joined the president in paying homage to victims at the scene of the crime asserting "Resolved, That the Senate-- … (5) applauds the bravery and quick thinking exhibited by those individuals who prevented the gunman from potentially taking more lives and helped to save those who had been wounded" (McCain 2011b). Michelle Obama (White House 2011f), commenting on the families of the victims, recounts the following: "Yesterday, we had the chance to attend a memorial service and meet with some of the families of those who lost their lives, and both of us were deeply moved by their strength and resilience in the face of such unspeakable tragedy."

Obama, as well as Gabby's colleagues from Arizona in congress, also commented on the bravery of Giffords and her husband Mark Kelly. For instance, Senator John McCain (2011c) observed that "Gabby's courage in the face of tragedy inspired our nation and made all Arizonans proud." Another congressional colleague, Paul Gosar (2012a) asserted that "The work ethic and determination that characterized Gabby's professionalism in representing the people of Arizona's 9th district are the same personality traits that allowed for her to turn a tragic accident into an example of hope. As, I've said before congresswoman Giffords is an Arizona miracle."

Obama (White House 2012a), a year after the shootings, also commended Giffords and Kelly for

their bravery by stating:

> Over the last year, Gabby and her husband mark have taught us the true meaning of hope
> in the face of despair, determination in the face of incredible odds, and now—ever after
> she's come so far – Gabby shows us what it means to be selfless as well.

Congressman David Schweikert (2012a) of Arizona speaks to the resilience of the people

of Arizona in the face of tragedy.

> A year ago today, an assault on our democracy and those participating in it, left our
> Arizona community with deep wounds. But Arizonans have turned our sense of grief
> into a sense of resolve. We will continue the work of our democracy, moving forward
> with the memory of those we lost and gratitude for those who are still with us.

In a broader statement aimed at the nation as a whole, Senator Franks (2011a) sends a

strong message proclaiming that "we should make it clear to such evil individuals that free

people in a Constitutional Republic such as ours will not be intimidated by this kind of evil."

Overcoming Fear in Norway: A Collective Affair

Another key theme emerging from state talk issued by the Norwegian government is the

urging of citizens to overcome fear. Calls for more democracy, openness, and refusal to fight

violence with violence have been televised and praised worldwide (Andersson 2012). As noted

by Spaaij (2012: 92), a key element of Norway's response to the attacks has been a "refusal to be

terrorized."

Throughout the present sample, government actors called upon Norwegians to resist

succumbing to fear. For instance, Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime Minister 2011b) stated that

> Thousands and thousands of Norwegians – in Oslo and all over the country – are doing
> what you are this evening. Taking over the streets, the squares, the public space, with the
> same defiant message: We are broken hearted, but we are not broken. With torches and
> roses we are sending a message out to the world: We will not allow fear to break us. And
> we will not allow the fear of fear to silence us.

Statements such as these stress how important it is for people to not allow fear to undermine the "…open debate…respect for different opinions…democracy and humanism" which undergird Norwegian culture (Office of the Prime Minister 2011c). Similarly, King Harald V (Royal House of Norway 2011) called for continued faith in Norwegian democracy in the face of difficult times stating "I firmly believe that freedom is stronger than fear. I firmly believe in an open Norwegian democracy and society. I firmly believe that we will uphold our ability to live freely and securely in our own country."

Stoltenberg connects resisting fear to maintaining Norwegian values when he states that "the bombs and bullets were intended to change Norway. The Norwegian people responded by reasserting our values" (Office of the Prime Minister 2012d). Government officials also drew attention to the importance of resisting fear by stating "…more democracy and more openness, but never naivety" (Office of the Prime Minister 2011c). Støre (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011) also assured the public that "Norway will be recognizable" moving forward after the attacks. Statements such as these exemplify calls to keep the attack from undermining Norwegian culture.

Noting the fearful reactions to terrorist attacks elsewhere, Støre asserted that "Osama bin Laden successfully provoked the West into using exceptional powers…this only strengthened the case of extremists, and it shows that we should try to avoid exceptionalism and instead trust in the open system we are defending" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012). Such a strategy, he went on to argue, would not provide "…extremists with evidence of the supposed double standards of democracy." Statements such as these signal a desire to avoid the tendency of treating high profile cases of terrorism as exceptions to proscribed legal procedures. This represents a

departure from the more punitive calls and actions of other countries that have been impacted to terrorism.

Discussion

Looking at the American case, the focus is on the bravery of those who were present during the shooting on January 8th. American political elites do not urge the American people as a whole to remain calm and avoid rash action but rather focus on the individual heroes. Various individuals have been commended by politicians for protecting others, attempting to disarm Loughner, and rendering aid to the wounded. Gabby Giffords and her husband Mark Kelly have also been commended for their brave handling of Gabby's recovery from wounds sustained in the shooting. Given the stronghold of neoliberalism in the United States and the highly individualistic and competitive nature of American society, it is perhaps unsurprising that American political elites emphasize the individual over the collective. Scholarship has firmly established the destruction of the social in the United States. Much of this work links the destabilizing consequences of neoliberalism to, declining social supports coupled with rampant individualism, crime, and harsh responses to crime.

In contrast, Norwegian political elites spoke to the need for society as a collective to resist succumbing to fear in an effort to avoid compromising core values of democracy, openness and strong social supports. Politicians also implored citizens not to meet violence with violence. In sum, politicians are pledging to uphold Norway's image as a peaceful exemplar of democracy, solidarity, and egalitarian social policy while urging citizens to do the same. This approach to the attacks has been praised across the globe as well as by criminologists such as Spaaij (2012) and Pratt and Eriksson (2013).

Shedding light on the importance of refusing to succumb to fear, Wollebæk and

colleagues (2012) highlight the importance of government talk in shaping the media response to

the attacks when they observe that:

> One possible explanation for these low levels of fear and for the confidence in the
> government's ability to avert new attacks after Utøya can be found in the attitude taken
> by the Norwegian government in their media response to the attacks. In their response,
> the government issued a call to the population for solidarity and serenity, and this call
> was quickly echoed both in traditional and social media (Wollebæk et al. 2012: 35).

Anne Holt (2011), an internationally acclaimed Norwegian author, former police officer,

former Minister of Justice, and lawyer draws attention to the need to avoid hasty securitization

asserting that

> A society where all these hateful people are under surveillance is a society we definitely
> do not want. The attacks on Norway that terrible Friday seem to be, a few days later, of a
> kind that probably no free democratic nation can protect itself from once a terrorist has
> decided to act.

Prominent Norwegians, echoing politicians, draw upon core social values such as trust,

solidarity, and democracy in urging their fellow citizens to practice restraint. These speakers,

addressing an international audience, reinforce the global image of Norway as an exemplar of

democracy.

FACILITATORS

Factors thought to facilitate punitive responses to crime have also been discussed in the

criminological literature. The first refers to distrust and lack of confidence in government

(Snacken 2010). The second, social division, refers to talk that advocates exclusion of

individuals or groups deemed unpopular or dangerous as well as deep rifts between those who

disagree (Lappi- Seppälä 2007; Ugelvik 2012). The third is fear and risk (Snacken 2010).

DISTRUST AND LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE STATE

Although the government talk analyzed in the present study identified possible constraints on punitive responses, there is also the need to consider factors that may facilitate more incendiary reactions to tragedy. Literature, primarily focused on Anglo-Saxon countries, has drawn attention to possible facilitators such as distrust and lack of confidence in the government, social division, and an emphasis on fear and risk.

Distrust and Lack of Confidence in the United States

Distrust and lack of confidence in the government, given the importance attributed to its opposite, trust and confidence in the government, is another key consideration in better understanding how societies respond to tragedies such as politically motivated mass shootings (Snacken 2010; Amna et al. 2007). Furthermore, scholars have also linked punitive rhetoric and action mobilized by politicians to efforts to build and reinforce trust in government in the face of crises of legitimacy (Garland 2001; Simon 2007). In the space that follows, evidence of distrust and lack of confidence in the government derived from the data will be presented.

Shortly after the shootings, President Obama (White House 2011a) pleaded that "If this tragedy prompts reflection and debate—as it should—lets make sure that it's worthy of those we have lost. Let's make sure it's not on the usual plane of politics and point-scoring and pettiness that drifts away in the next news cycle." Similarly, President Obama (2011c) states "As shrill and discordant as our politics can be at times, it was a moment that reminded us of who we really are—how much we depend on one another."

However, President Obama, soon disgusted with congress for not passing "common sense" gun legislation, repeatedly suggests that Congress does not represent the will of the

American people. Furthermore, he accuses congress of being too afraid of the National Rifle

Association (NRA) to do take action to prevent mass shootings. For example,

> But we know, for example, from polling that universal background checks are universally supported just about, by gun owners. The majority of gun owners, overwhelming majority of gun owners think that's a good ideas. So if we've got lobbyist in Washington claiming to speak for gun owners saying something different, we need to go to the source and reach out to people directly. (White House 2013f).

> Later, in the same speech, Obama (White House 2013f) continues to disparage the

inaction of congress in the face of multiple mass shootings as well as contest the notion that his

true agenda is to ban all guns stating:

> That's why I need everybody who's listening to keep the pressure on your member of Congress to do the right thing. Ask them if they support common-sense reforms like requiring universal background checks, or restoring the ban on military-style assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. Tell the there's no legislation to eliminate all guns; there's no legislation being proposed to subvert the Second amendment.

> President Obama (White House 2013c) again expresses his frustration regarding

Congressional inaction in the face of wide support for gun control lamenting that

> Ninety percent of Americans support universal background checks. Think about that. How often do 90 percent of American agree on anything…And yet, there is only one thing that can stand in the way of change that just about everybody agrees on, and that is politics in Washington.

> Press Secretary Jay Carney (White House 2013d) expresses frustrations similar to those

of the President decrying that

> It would be appalling if common-sense legislation supported by 90 percent of the American people, by something like 80 percent of Republicans, 80 percent of gun owners were to be filibustered. Have the courage of your convictions and allow a vote, and vote no…We fully expect and hope that individual senators will see the rightness in allowing votes on these measures, even if they believe that they need to vote no for whatever reason. The victims of Newtown and of Aurora, of Oak Creek and Tucson, of Virginia Tech and the countless other victims of other shooting deserve that.

> Arizona congressional representative Raul Grijalva (2012a) also weighed in on the

inability of legislators to move forward on gun-control suggesting that "If pro-gun activists will

not negotiate in good faith, it is time for the country to move on without them" Jay Carney, Press

Secretary, has also fielded multiple inquiries from members of the media regarding inaction in

the face of continued mass shootings after Obama promised reform in the wake of the Giffords

shootings. For instance,

> Q: On a different topic, on July 7th, which was the six-month anniversary of the Gabby Giffords shooting, you said that you have some specific announcements 'in the near future' regarding gun safety measures. That obviously hasn't happened, so what is the holdup? Mr. Carney. I'll have to take the question. I don't, obviously, have any announcements to make today. I know that process is continuing, and we'll try to get some more information for you after the briefing. (White House 2011g).

Nearing the one year anniversary of the Giffords shooting, Carney (White House 2012b)

fields yet another inquiry about the lack of action regarding gun-control in Washington:

> We're approaching the one-year anniversary of the Gabby Giffords shooting. And she's of course going to do things this weekend and mark it in a certain way. And when the President spoke and gave that really moving—by a lot of accounts- speech, he talked about taking steps on gun safety and gun control in the months ahead. Does he have plans of actually following through on that a year later? Mr. Carney: Well, I think we—did we publish that? I think we have put forward some positions on this, and I don't have anything new for you on it. And I don't have anything for you on the anniversary itself. It obvious was a – I mean it's a solemn occasion given that—I mean, it's a remarkable recovery that Congresswoman Gifford's has made, but we can never forget the lives lost on that day.

Speaking after Congress voted against gun control, President Obama (White House

2013a) expressed frustration with the political scene observing that

> There were no coherent arguments as to why we couldn't do it. It came down to politics—the worry that that vocal minority of gun owners would come after them in future elections. 'All in all, this was a pretty shameful day for Washington.'

The White House (2014a), in a piece written by Pamela Simon who was shot in the arm

and the chest on January 8th while serving as Congresswoman Giffords Community Coordinator,

also criticizes the bitter partisanship plaguing Congress stating that "those bullets hit democrats

and Republicans alike,' and that the rift between both parties on the issue is a detriment and danger to this nation.

Distrust and Lack of Confidence in the Norwegian State

The least talked about theme in the Norwegian context is distrust and lack of confidence in the government. Scholars have also linked punitive rhetoric and action mobilized by politicians to efforts to build and reinforce trust in government in the face of crises of legitimacy (Garland 2001; Simon 2007). Although relatively little was said by Norwegian officials regarding distrust and lack of confidence in the government, it is possible that the passage of time may bring to light further criticism of the handling of the situation (Wollebæk et al. 2012). Given this observation, further longitudinal analysis of public opinions and media responses is needed to track trends over time.

Although government officials largely spoke to trust in government, Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime Minister 2012b) observed that "…what went right and what went wrong…is a necessary and important debate. In order to learn [and] prevent such a tragedy [from] happening again." This observation serves as acknowledgement that the government made missteps that need to be rectified. In a follow-up to the 22 July Commission Report, Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime Minister 2012c) also indicated the need to "…galvanize the public administration in a common effort that restores confidence" thus indicating that the attacks had undermined public trust and confidence in the government. Similarly, the Secretary of State Roger Ingebrigtsen) pointed out that

> Now, more than four months after, the mood has changed. The media and political
> opposition have increasingly turned critical to the handling of the situation. Questions
> have appeared. Did the government do everything in its power to protect its citizens?
> (Ministry of Defense 2011)

Quotes like this indicate the possibility that as time has passed some have become less confident in the government's handling of the situation.

Discussion

The American sample is rife with examples of politicians criticizing their opponents on the other side of the political aisle. This is most evident when talking about ways to deal with America's gun violence problem. President Obama repeatedly accused Republican lawmakers in Congress of defying the will of the American people on gun control legislation at the behest of the National Rifle Association, a political lobbying group which funnels money to political candidates who denounce gun control. President Obama also accused opponents of promoting blatant falsehoods stating that he has no intention of banning guns or creating a national registry of gun owners, contrary to what gun advocates and the National Rifle Association have accused him of.

Norwegian politicians acknowledged the necessity of having an open debate on what the government and its agents did right and wrong in handling the attacks perpetrated by Brevik in hopes of preventing such a tragedy from happening again. In response to the 22 July Commission Report reviewing the attacks, Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg asserted the need to maintain and restore public trust in the state. Looking at the response of the public to the attacks over time, Secretary of State Roger Ingebrigsten also acknowledged that the mood had grown more critical.

SOCIAL DIVISION

Social division and low levels of interpersonal trust are associated with a variety of social problems such as inequality, increased social distance, a weak social safety net, low levels of collective responsibility, and reduced problem solving capacity. Looking to the relationship

between criminal justice and social division we tend to see high levels of fear, higher levels of

punitiveness, and lower levels of overall societal peace (Crepaz 2008, Lappi- Seppälä 2008,

Green 2008). Scholars such as Crepaz (2008) and Green (2008) observe that neoliberal countries

such as the United States tend to be more socially divided than countries with a stronger social-

welfare orientation such as Norway.

Social Division American Style

President Obama, in the days following January 8th, called attention, albeit weakly and

indirectly, to the relationship between violent rhetoric and violent action calling for greater

civility in how Americans talk to one another. He stated

> And if, as it has been discussed in recent days, their death helps usher in more civility in
> our public discourse, let us remember it is not because a simple lack of civility caused
> this tragedy—it did not—but rather because only a more civil and honest public discourse
> can help us face up to the challenges of our nation in a way that would make them proud
> (White House 2011a).

Much of the discourse surrounding the January 8th shootings centers on differentiating

'good' people from 'bad' people in society. For instance, Senator Trent Franks (2011a) of

Arizona situates Loughner against Giffords proclaiming "Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords is a

precious, decent human being, and the monstrous degenerate that shot her should be prosecuted

with the greatest energy that we can muster to the fullest extent of the law possible…" In another

statement, Franks (2011b) continues on to say "…one bereft of heart, human compassion and

respect for innocent human life, mindlessly and heartlessly shattered her the life and the lives of

so many others around her."

Similarly, Senator John McCain (2011a) states "Whoever did this; whatever their reason,

they are a disgrace to Arizona, this country, and the human race and they deserve and will

receive the contempt of all decent people and the strongest punishment of law." Linking good vs.

evil rhetoric to gun rights, Senators Franks (n.d.) asserts that "…the people behind gun tragedies should be held responsible for their reprehensible actions. The rest of the law-abiding citizens should not have to have more of their liberties taken away from them due to a madman's assault on human lives." This stands in contrast to statements coming from the White House which advocate for "common sense" gun control.

Social Division in Norway

There was comparatively little talk by officials of a lack of cohesion in Norwegian society in the aftermath of the attacks. As noted elsewhere in the literature (Lacey 2008; Pratt 2008, Lappi- Seppälä; Tonry 2011), homogeneity has likely facilitated the development and maintenance of Norway's welfare state and criminal justice system. Heterogeneity (particularly the fear of heterogeneity) presents challenges to the welfare state and criminal justice system. Both the attacks and Breivik's links to anti-immigrant, anti-multicultural views draw attention to societal tensions as Norway navigates the challenges of increased heterogeneity in a globalized world.

Looking at the attacks on 22 July, government discourse has focused primarily on Breivik as a lone wolf who does not share core Norwegian values and was motivated by animosity towards multi-culturalism. The Minister of Justice and Public Security (2011a) taps into the tensions underlying increasing heterogeneity in Norway describing the perpetrator as wanting "…to attack those he deemed to be 'multi-culturalists' – the political forces that allegedly allow and facilitate for an increasingly Muslim population in Norway."

In the current sample of government talk, social division also manifested itself in a more sociological sense with several statements pointing out how poorly integrated into Norwegian

society Breivik was. For instance, Secretary of State Ingebrigtsen characterized the perpetrator as:

> …a 32 year old Norwegian, a Christian and a Caucasian male. Abandoned by his father and deprived of his mother's care, his childhood become [became] isolated and lonely. Although being raised in the privileged parts of Oslo, he appeared unable to bond and embark upon a clear professional path. He became a drifter frequently altering careers, turning to right wing, anti-immigrant rhetoric, ending up as a 'lone wolf' (Ministry of Defense 2011).

This description links Breivik's ill integration into society to his destructive fascination with extremism and contempt for diversity. Implicitly, the Secretary of State speaks to the premium placed on social integration and support as mechanisms of crime prevention in Norway, while highlighting the perils of social isolation and exclusion.

Discussion

Similar to Green's (2009) findings analyzing the aftermath of child-on-child homicide cases in the United Kingdom and Norway, I found evidence of a crisis of social solidarity in the American data. Time and again American political speakers spoke to the fractures in American society, most notably between (1) those advocating restrictions on firearms and those resisting restrictions on firearms and (2) offenders and victims. Both trends present in the data fit with the narrative that the United States is a divided and untrusting society, in ways that impact responses to crime (Crepaz 2008, Lappi- Seppälä 2008, Simon 2007).

Looking at the Norwegian response to July 22nd, we see a focus on cultural heterogeneity, a trend decried by Breivik. Tensions surrounding heterogeneity have been and remain high in Norway leading political figures to tread carefully given that Breivik used this trend as a motive for his violence. Furthermore, political elites describe Breivik as a lone wolf who rejected core Norwegian values and was poorly integrated into society. Here we see speakers trying to distance the Norwegian mainstream, rife with tension surrounding multiculturalism, from

Breivik. Holt (cited in Brown 2011) succinctly deals with this issue suggesting that "when it

comes to his opinions and his ideology, he [Breivik] is certainly not alone in Norway, and that is

maybe one of the greatest tragedies of this terrorist attack." Holt's comments underline the

tension between distancing Breivik from society and acknowledging that his views are also

embedded in society.

FEAR

     Criminological literature on fear of crime has established that fear impacts how societies

respond to crime. Comparative research using social surveys highlight considerable cross-

national variation in levels of fear. Such findings beg us to examine the factors underlying these

differences. Research suggests that broader insecurities and weak social welfare provisions fuel

fear of crime. Furthermore, fear of crime is linked to social ills such as poorer self-reported

health, low levels of interpersonal trust, and weaker social solidarity (Hummelsheim et al. 2011,

Visser et al. 2013). The United States, with its notoriously weak welfare state, is proffered as an

example of a high fear society while Norway, with its strong welfare state, serves as an example

of a lower fear society.

Fear in The United States

     In the space that follows, evidence of an emphasis on fear and risk derived from the data

will be presented. Pamela Simon (White House 2014), one of Gifford's Congressional Staffers

who went on to help develop the Mayors against Illegal Guns' Demand a Plan initiative and was

designated as a Gun Violence Prevention Champion of Change, described the horrific scene on

January 8th:

> Suddenly, gunfire erupted. In less than 20 seconds, six people lay dead and 12 others-
> including Congresswoman Giffords and me- were wounded. As my body and mind
> healed over the months that followed, I learned a lot about an issue that I previously had
> all but ignored. The numbers were staggering. 12000 Americans are murdered with a gun

each year…For too long, silence has been the response from elected officials and individual citizens despite overwhelming evidence of the problem.

In the days following the attacks, officials spoke to the uncertainty, senselessness, and fear surrounding the attacks. For instance, Vice President Joe Biden (White House 2011h) asserted "We do not yet know the motivation behind these shootings. But what we do know is that there is simply no justification, no rationale for such senseless and appalling violence in our society." Similarly, President Obama (White House 2011i) stated "We do not yet have all the answers. What we do know is that such a senseless and terrible act of violence has no place in a free society." Senator Trent Franks (2011b) of Arizona also speaks to fear noting "Madam Speaker, the tragedy this past weekend in Arizona has been a reminder to all of us of the brevity and delicate nature of this earthly life."

In a later statement, Obama (White House 2012c) reminds people of the frailty of life and the unpredictable nature of violent:

> For the truth is none of us can know exactly what triggered this vicious attack. None of us can know with any certainty what might have stopped these shots from being fired, or what thoughts lurked in the inner recesses of a violent man's mind.

In an open letter to parents, First Lady Michelle Obama (White House 2011f) stated "It makes us want to hug our own families a little tighter. And it makes us think about what an event like this says about the world we live in and the world in which our children will grow up."

Another fearful thread woven throughout the sample pertains to guns. According to Arizona Senator Trent Franks (n.d), "More citizens should even be encouraged to own weapons and to become more proficient in the weapons they already own. Criminals have always preferred and will continue to prefer unarmed victims." In response to fears such as Senator Frank's that the 2nd amendment will be subverted by gun control Principal Deputy Press Secretary Josh Earnest (White House 2013e) countered "And again, you can't reiterate often

enough—we can take these common-sense steps without infringing in any way on the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens." President Obama (White House 2013b), speaking to gun advocate fears, also states:

> But instead of supporting this compromise, the gun lobby and its allies willfully lied about the bill. They claimed that it would create some sort of 'big brother' gun registry, even though the bill did the opposite. This legislation, in fact, outlawed any registry.

In contrast to gun advocates fearing infringement on the 2nd Amendment, Obama (White House 2013f) speaks fearfully of the proliferation of high-powered guns with extended clips asserting that "We should restore the ban on military-style assault weapons and a 10-round limit for magazines. And that deserves a vote in Congress because weapons of war have no place on our streets, or in our schools, or threatening our law enforcement officers."

Fear in Norway

Fear and risk, suggested correlates of punitiveness, make reference to words or language indicating that the attack invoked anxiety, and/or uncertainty (Garland 2001, Franko Aas 2005). This particular theme appeared in limited measure in government issued talk analyzed in this study. Storberget (Ministry of Justice and Police 2011a) described the scene on Utøya Island as one of "…mutilations, fear, pain, anger and desperation." Similarly, Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime Minister 2011c) painted a picture of "…shock, fear and devastation" in the wake of the attacks. Emphasizing the impact of the attacks on children both directly and indirectly victimized, the King described a climate in which "many of our children and young people are afraid today" (Royal House of Norway 2011). Stoltenberg also addressed the impact on youth indicating "young people have experienced things that no one should have to experience. Fear, blood, and death" (Office of the Prime Minister 2011c). Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime Minister 2012a), speaking to the vulnerabilities of democracy, stated that "our open democratic

society also leaves room for extremism. The Internet is teeming with threats." Shifting to the

vulnerability of individuals and the generalized threat of death, Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime

Minister 2012b) remarked upon the "…transience of life. It can suddenly be over. None of us

knows when. None of us knows who…" hinting at the anxiety and uncertainty that tragedy can

breed. U.S. and Norwegian state talk overlap most here.

Discussion

In the American case, victims of the January 8th attacks were quoted as being highly

afraid as Loughner unleashed carnage and chaos at Gifford's Congress on Your Corner event.

Politicians also pushed the view that violence is random and unpredictable. As such, politicians

are largely powerless in preventing it and there is nothing we can do as a society reduce violence.

Political elites also focused on fear surrounding guns. On one side, politicians,

predominately Republican, reinforced fears that the government, in attempting to enact gun

control, are gearing up to subvert 2nd amendment rights by confiscating guns and creating a

national registry of gun owners. Those against gun control also express fears that crime and

violence will increase under the logic that criminals prefer unarmed victims. On the other hand,

politicians express fear that failure to keep guns out of the hands of established criminals and the

mentally ill in concert with failing to restrict weapons of war will continue to fuel America's

violence problem. They argue that until we enact 'common sense' regulations, American will

continue to be a world leader in violent crime.

Norwegian political elites in discussing fear emanating from the July 22nd attacks, speak

to the suffering of victims and society at large. Often when talking about fear resulting from the

attacks, politicians focus on children given Breivik's concerted attack on a youth political camp.

Politicians also speak more broadly to the transience of life and the vulnerabilities of democracy.

CONCLUSION

In concert with comparative literature, I went into the project under the pretense that state talk surrounding politically mass shootings would vary across cultures. Case studies from the United States and Norway, two countries with well documented socio-economic and cultural differences, illustrate different ways of talking about crime by political elites. Such work is important given the interrelatedness of state talk, media coverage, and public opinion. Better understanding of these interdependencies is key to better understanding punitiveness as well as working towards calmer and more productive ways of addressing social problems such as crime.

CHAPTER 5

PUTTING DIVERGENT RESPONSES IN CONTEXT

Many people in the media and throughout the country immediately ran to call for stricter gun laws – especially for the cessation of larger gun magazines (like the one the Tucson shooter had that morning). All of these people missed the point entirely: the people behind gun tragedies should be held responsible for their reprehensible actions. The rest of the law-abiding citizens should not have to have more of their liberties taken away from them due to a madman's assault on human lives. We should attempt to detect these mentally unstable individuals at an earlier time with hopes of keeping weapons out of their hands, but that should be the extent of further government interference (Franks n.d.)

But it is the way the Norwegian people have responded to the atrocities during the past year that matters most: There is greater confidence among us, and greater faith in democracy. Thousands have joined voluntary organisations and political parties. And more people are responding to hate speech with counterarguments. Hundreds of thousands have realised the power of pulling together, of reasserting our values (Office of the Prime Minister 2012b).

INTRODUCTION

Following the violent events of January 11th and July 22nd, state talk diverged sharply. In the United States, a no holds barred battle broke out over firearms. Political leaders such as Arizona Congressman Trent Franks, staunchly opposed gun control and framed efforts to curb access to military grade weapons and extended clips as a violation of the U.S. Constitution. Attempting to decouple guns from the tragedy perpetrated by Loughner, speakers such as Franks sought to shift the conversation to mental illness. In Norway, leaders spoke to the way that July 22nd brought people together to reaffirm their commitment to core Norwegian values, the same values that criminologists theorize lead to more peaceful societies, both in terms of citizen to citizen interactions and state to citizen interactions.

Drawing on Beckett's (1997) discussion on agenda setting, two types of frames become evident in the state talk analyzed in the present study. The first type, episodic frames, are largely

devoid of social context and tend to be highly individualistic. The second type, thematic frames, include greater social and historic context. The way in which state actors frame crime matters in so far as episodic frames are more likely to inspire individual attributions of responsibility than thematic frames. The present work, where American officials rely heavily on episodic themes and Norwegian officials favor thematic frames, illustrates this.

Reactions to crime are a political and social choice that speak to societal self-image. As such, it is crucial that scholars pay close attention to the context in which state talk is embedded in order to better understand variation in responses to tragedies, such as political mass shootings, cross-nationally (Barker 2009). Scholars such as Snacken (2015), Rothe and Muzzatti (2004), Beckett (1997) and Bonn (2011) point to the importance of political tone and rhetoric in shaping public opinion and media coverage. Work such as this illustrates ways that state talk can serve to escalate or de-escalate responses to high profile events. In line with other comparative criminological literature, it was theorized that the content of state talk would differ between the United States and Norway in ways that (a) reflect the cultural context in which it is embedded and that (b) aim to reproduce that context.

The contrasts between American and Norwegian governmental talk illustrated in the present study shed light on debates surrounding American Exceptionalism at one end of the punitive continuum and Scandinavian Exceptionalism at the other. Criminological literature has established that the United States is an exemplar of punitiveness, both in social and crime policy (Wacquant 2009, Garland 2001, Simon 2007, Messner and Rosenfeld 2007). In contrast, scholars have described the Norwegian approach to social problems, including crime, as strikingly less punitive (Pratt 2008, Green 2009). Work aimed at better understanding these striking differences in how societies cope with collective problems focuses on the relationship between social

context and outcomes. As pointed out by Karstedt (2015), criminology needs to pay more attention to the role of social institutions in shaping both crime and responses to crime.

The use of these two particular cases examined in the present work helps to better understand the structural and cultural attributes which contribute to divergent tone and rhetoric of political leaders in the aftermath of tragic mass shootings. Work in this vein sheds light on the relationship between what agents of the state say and how societies react to crime. To get at these issues, the present work examines the question: how does state talk—conditioned by economic, political, and cultural forces—facilitate or constrain punitive responses to political mass shootings? As Green (2009: 521) posits and the present study illustrates, "…the appeal of tough talk is stronger in some places than others." Combining comparative literature with data on state talk helps us to better understand the interaction of state talk, context, and punishment.

Here, state talk is considered from two angles. The first conceptualizes state talk as a dependent variable. By this, I mean that state talk depends on social context. The second considers state talk as an independent variable. By this, I mean that social context depends, at least in part, on state talk which aims to reinforce the status quo. Thinking about state talk as both a dependent and independent variable sheds light on the reciprocal relationship between state talk and social context.

STATE TALK AS DEPENDENT ON SOCIAL CONTEXT

Comparative criminological literature has established that social context matters greatly in terms of how societies respond to crime (Lacey 2008, Cavidino and Dignan 2006). As Beckett (1997) reminds us, politicians rely on powerful cultural imagery. Here, the focus is on better understanding how social context conditions state talk. Literature in the social sciences has established key differences in social context between the United States and Norway. Core

attributes of the hyper- individual neoliberal American context include the following: disinvestment in social supports, privatization of social services, increasingly precarious labor conditions, rampant inequality, fierce political bi-partisanship, the hijacking of social institutions by the economy, and an emphasis on using the criminal justice system rather than supportive social policy to address social problems (Currie 1997, Messner and Rosenfeld 2007, Standing 2012, Wacquant 2009). In contrast, social-democratic and more collectively oriented Norway is characterized by the following: a strong social welfare state, universal access to a wide range of 'cradle to grave' social supports, cooperative politics, and an emphasis on social over criminal justice responses to social problems (Pratt 2008, Pratt and Eriksson 2013). State talk surrounding January 8th and July 22nd is indicative of these stark differences.

Studies, particularly in the post 9/11 era, demonstrate the American tendency towards divisive rhetoric in the face of national tragedy. In contrast, Norwegian political elites call for moderation and level headedness in the face of the worst tragedy to befall Norway since the Second World War. These different ways of talking about tragedy reflect the broader social context in which it is embedded.

American State Talk

The shooting in Tucson provides an example of a mass shooting event that has ignited controversy, exceptional measures, and discussion of policy changes noted in the literature as common for the United States context (Rothe and Muzzatti 2004; Bonn 2011). These reactions, long a part of the American repertoire for responding to violence, are an outcome of the way in which American society is organized. Much of this literature on the social construction of crime focuses on the incendiary nature of state and media discourse, particularly in the United States. State talk surrounding January 8th, drawing on core narratives, reflects the United States'

comparatively more volatile and competitive social order. The question of how state talk reflects the existing social order, particularly in the face of horrific events, is an important issue for criminologists.

In the American context, there is much to be gained from the promotion of crisis narratives by political elites. As Beckett (1997) reminds us, the focus on crime helps to divert attention away from troubling social conditions. Examples of prominent crisis narratives woven into the fabric of American life include: the war on drugs, the war on terror, the appalling treatment of immigrants, the death penalty, and the increasing overlap between schools and the criminal justice system. The discourse surrounding all of these issues relies on two prominent themes. The first, reactivity, refers to the idea that there is not much we can do to prevent crime so we must be prepared to punish perpetrators harshly in the name of deterrence and incapacitation. The second, a highly individualistic theme, is the idea that wicked people exist. Curiously, we rarely ask where these so-called wicked people come from or why there seem to be more of them in the United States than elsewhere (Currie 2015). Both beliefs work to keep the United States at the cutting edge of punitive reactions to crime by promoting individual level responses to social problems.

Criminologists, seeking to explain the punitive turn, have identified tough talk, by politicians, the media, and citizens alike, as a contributing factor (Simon 2007, Garland 2001, Green 2009, Beckett and Sasson 2005). Such talk is fueled by cultural attributes such as individualism, social division, distrust in both each other and the state, majoritarian democracy, fearfulness, and inequality. Pratt and colleagues (2005) posit that tough talk and demands for law and order by politicians are related to high levels of insecurity experienced in places such as the United States. Snacken (2015) suggests that repressive political rhetoric feeds harsh policies and

practices. Conditions such as those found in the United States contribute to a punitive vocabulary which is evidenced in the present work. This vocabulary, propagated by the state and disseminated through the media, matters at the level of public opinion and policy in ways that fuel a more divided, competitive, and ultimately vengeful social order.

Both Beckett (1997) and Newburn and Jones (2005), speaking to the utility of crisis talk in majoritarian democracies, illustrate this point using the Bush-Dukakis presidential election of 1988. They argue that Bush was able to mobilize fear of crime levering the case of Willie Horton, who raped and assaulted a couple while on furlough from prison in Massachusetts, under Governor Dukakis. Painted soft on crime, Dukakis lost the race despite having initially polled higher than Bush. This event is significant, argue Newburn and Jones (2005), because it helped to make tough on crime a prominent theme for both Republicans and Democrats. Furthermore, the tough on crime agenda exacerbated by the Willie Horton case migrated to other countries, notably the United Kingdom. Work such as this reminds us that talk has real consequences and that tough talk thrives in some contexts more than others, a central point in the present work.

Also speaking to the prevalence of crisis narratives and tough on crime rhetoric in Anglo-Saxon countries, Green (2009) observes a competition to control political discourse surrounding crime in the quest to score points. Crisis narratives, advanced on both sides of the political aisle, are used in hopes of obtaining competitive advantage in a winner takes all system. Such tactics fuel instability and punitive reactions (Green 2009, Tonry 2004). By situating state talk in the criminological literature, it becomes possible to illustrate factors already identified in the literature in ways that help give nuance and texture to the literature on punitiveness and the social factors that support it.

In the hours immediately following the attacks, American officials emphasized both the senseless nature of the attacks and the evil of the perpetrator. These two points, speak to the view in American society at large that little can be done to prevent violence and that the perpetrators of such attacks are individual aberrations as opposed to symptomatic of the larger cultural context in which they are embedded. Later efforts by authorities to describe Loughner teeter between painting him as a monster and as severely mentally ill. Both rhetorical trajectories squarely focus on the individual with little attention to the notably violent nature of American society as a whole. By framing mass shootings such as January 8th in this way, politicians effectively divert attention from the social causes of the American violence problem as well as the need for collective, social responses to violence. This highly individualistic framework attempts to absolve the state from taking seriously their responsibility to provide security in ways that stymie any concrete action to prevent such acts of violence in the future.

Though there is some evidence that language used by government officials in the American case draws upon core values such as trust in the government, social solidarity, and overcoming fear; however, the way in which these themes manifest is notably different from the Norwegian case. Contrary to my assumptions going in that there would be less talk evidencing these constraining cultural forces in the United States than in Norway, there is actually quite a bit of talk surrounding at least two out of three of these themes. The first, trust in the government, proved to be rather limited in the American context. What references there were to this sought primarily to frame conflict as evidence of a strong and robust democracy. The second, social cohesion and inclusion, consisted largely of pleas by politicians for prayer. Across the board, politicians' emphasized religious prayer based reactions to January 8th and the myriad of mass shootings that have followed. It is also worth noting that juxtaposed with these appeals for

collective prayer are calls for something decidedly less inclusive though also religiously

symbolic, revenge. In more limited measure, politicians, particularly President Obama,

emphasized the need to bridge differences and work together. Throughout political speeches

given by President Obama, tense political disagreement is framed as evidence of the strength of

American democracy.

In this study, although state talk surrounding January 8th shows some, albeit highly

individualized, constraints on punitiveness, it is worth noting the prominence of language calling

for maximum penalties. In line with other work, the results of this study confirm America's

reputation for individualistic treatment of crime and the people who commit it. Much of what

was said by political elites following the horrors of January 8th aimed to assure the public that

Loughner, deemed simultaneously evil and mentally ill, would be dealt with harshly and

rendered unable to threaten public safety ever again, whether through incarceration or the death

penalty.

Facilitators identified in this paper such as a lack of trust and confidence in the

government, lack of social solidarity, and the tendency to succumb to fear help to fuel the

punitive calls for action by American political figures. Features of the American context such as

a hyper competitive two party government system, and the continued slashing of social services

and supports, may contribute to punitive calls in the aftermath of mass shootings such as the

Loughner case (Green 2007; Pratt 2008). In line with other literature, it is theorized that low

levels of trust and a weak sense of community, coupled with comparatively high levels of fear,

shape how Americans react to crime. After all, it is these social attributes that help to make the

rhetoric used by American officials possible in the first place. Incendiary, divisive state talk such

as that seen after January 8th reflects and reinforces American values and helps to preserve the violent status quo.

In addition to calling for maximum penalties for Loughner, politicians across the aisle continue to spar over gun control. Law makers, generally Republicans, fearfully express concern that President Obama, long painted as a dire threat to the Second Amendment, would seize on January 8th as a window of opportunity to push gun control, whether by executive order or legislation. Republican lawmakers, urged by powerful gun lobbyists such as the NRA, tapped into long standing fears that the government is plotting to strip 'good guys' of guns leaving only 'bad guys' armed. Such a scenario, they argue, is a threat to public safety under the assumption that it is feasible for the average 'good guy' to disarm the 'bad guy' thus preventing mass causalities.

Norwegian State Talk

In contrast to their American counterparts, Norwegian political elites communicated the need for Norway to uphold its values and remain recognizable in the aftermath of July 22nd. To do otherwise, politicians argued, would constitute a win for extremists. Norway's response not only provides a window into how the government hopes to portray itself, it also aspires to set the tone for media discourse and public opinion (Hawdon 2001; Roberts and Hough 2002).

Rather than being used to further the destruction of social bonds and supports through neoliberalization (Ajzenstadt 2009), state discourse surrounding the Breivik case urges Norwegians to avoid the process of othering and asks them not to turn their backs on the welfare policies that allow for Norway's comparatively egalitarian social order. Rather than stoking and exploiting social anxieties, Norwegian state talk emphasizes the importance of not succumbing to fear in light of this horrific though anomalous case. This sort of discourse, I argue, is a

reflection of the larger social context. I situate this state talk in the Norwegian social and cultural context linking it to the comparatively moderate response of Norway to the 22 July attacks.

The attacks in Norway provide a unique opportunity to examine an act of terrorism that has not yet ignited a panic, exceptional measures, and/or rapid policy changes seen elsewhere (Rothe and Muzzatti 2004; Bonn 2011). The present case study focuses on the culturally contingent nature of state responses to problems and the need to pay particular attention to the ways in which societies are organized. The contrasts between American and Norwegian government talk shed light on the Scandinavian Exceptionalism debate by focusing our attention on the tone and content of messages disseminated by Norwegian leaders in the aftermath of the attacks.

The language used by Norwegian government officials draws upon core societal values such as trust in the government, social solidarity, and overcoming fear. This rhetorical response differs considerably from that deployed by American officials in the aftermath of high profile events such as September 11th and January 8th that was punitive in tone emphasizing "evil enemies" and the establishment of a "with us or against us" dichotomy. The Norwegian case provides a window into how states construct more measured accounts of tragic events. State discourse surrounding the Breivik case, drawing on core values, reflects and reinforces Norway's comparatively less volatile and competitive social order.

Snacken (2015), reflecting on Finland's push for de-carceration in an effort to align more closely with its Nordic neighbors, argues that this shift was made possible in part by state talk. Notably, state talk in the Nordic context, she argues, is also more heavily informed by experts who tend to be highly respected than elsewhere also enabling leaders to speak more moderately about crime. As noted elsewhere (Green 2008, 2009), there is less political incentive for

Norwegian political figures to promote crisis narratives. Factors such as a strong social welfare state, consensual political culture, solidarity, low levels of fear surrounding crime, relative homogeneity, and a comparatively less sensational media help to produce more moderate ways of talking about and subsequently dealing with crime.

Given the need for consensus in government and high levels of trust in government, politicians are better able to speak in a cohesive fashion as there is less competition and division in Norway than elsewhere. This approach to politics has the effect of sending fewer mixed messages to the public. This contrasts sharply with the state of affairs in majoritarian systems, most notably the United States (Green 2009). In the hours immediately following the attacks, Norwegian officials emphasized the need to embrace not shun prized Norwegian values, thus setting the tone for responding to the tragedy (Thomassen et al. 2013).

The language used by government officials in the Norwegian case draws upon core values such as trust in the government, social solidarity, and overcoming fear. In line with Christensen and colleagues (2013), analysis of the present sample reveals an emphasis on the importance of democratic values, social cohesion, and supporting one another by government officials, particularly the Prime Minister whose office was responsible for the majority of state talk surrounding July 22nd.

In this study, although government talk surrounding the Breivik case shows both constraints and facilitators on punitiveness, it is worth noting the prominence of language calling for restraint in the handling of the Breivik case. Fimreite and colleagues (2013), in their analysis of the 22 July attacks, assert that crisis communication in the days following the tragedy called for more openness and democracy, noting a departure from leaders in the wake of other terrorist events in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Spain. Spaaij (2012), in his analysis of

counter-terrorism responses, also notes that the response of Norwegian officials to the attacks has emphasized support for democracy and Norwegian values instead of criticism of the state and its agencies, most notably the police.

Constraints identified in the present work such as trust and confidence in the government, emphasis on social inclusion, and efforts to resist succumbing to fear are theorized here and elsewhere to moderate punitiveness. Other features of Norwegian society such as coalition governments, the continued prominence of social welfare values, and high social spending, may also help to restrain punitiveness (Green 2007; Pratt 2008). Furthermore, high levels of trust and a strong sense of community, coupled with relatively low levels of fear both before and after the attacks, may also help to moderate punitiveness. It is these social attributes that help to make the rhetoric used by Norwegian officials possible in the first place. Moderate government talk may also help Norwegian values and the social structure itself to survive the attacks. As Norwegian political elites took pains to emphasize following July 22nd, Norway would remain recognizable on the world stage. In sum, government talk serves as both a reflection and a reinforcement of what may be a more decent social order.

Commenting on the response of the Norwegian people in the days after the atrocities, Pratt and Eriksson (2013: 208) observe that people focused on solidarity, democracy, and unity instead of demanding "savage recrimination from the state" and extreme and exceptional penalties such as the death penalty for Breivik. In response to controversy surrounding the admission of Breivik to online classes in political science at the University of Oslo, University Rector Ole Petter Ottersen (2013) published an article in The Guardian, an English language publication, explaining the decision to a global audience. In essence, Ottersen (2013) proposed that by refusing to treat Breivik as an exception to policy, Norwegians are demonstrating that

"…our values are fundamentally different from his." By responding in a "calm and reasoned way," sticking to its rules, resisting the adoption of new and exceptional rules, and trusting in the system, Ottersen (2013) argued that Norway has reaffirmed its commitment to democracy, the legal system, and in the case of the University of Oslo, the education system. This emphasis on supporting social institutions echoes that of Norway's political elites.

STATE TALK AS INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Given the reciprocal nature of the state talk – social context relationship, it is important that we also consider state talk as a reproducer of social context. Throughout both the American and Norwegian samples, we see calls to preserve core elements of the social milieu in each respective country. State actors help to set the agenda for the media and public opinion in ways that shape efforts to prevent crime and deal with its aftermath. In both cases, state talk in the United States and Norway made strong called for the maintenance of the status quo in each country. State talk in both cases reifies both social organization more broadly and reactions to crime.

The United States

American political elites repeatedly called for adherence to business as usual in the wake of the attempted assassination of Congresswoman Gabbi Giffords and the deaths of her constituents. A key theme throughout was the idea that the most Americans could do to combat mass violence was to pray for the victims, a very reactive approach. Many politicians advocated for more guns under the pretense that good guys with guns stop bad guys with guns, which helped cement America's reactive response to gun violence. This call, couched in calls for isolating 'evil' and 'mentally ill' offenders is very individualistic. Furthermore, the way in which American political elites speak reinforces toxic social, economic, and political arrangements that

criminologist have identified as criminogenic as well as fueling exclusionary and counterproductive ways of handling offenders.

Norway

Norwegian politicians in the hours, days, months, and even years following attacks on Utoya and the Oslo government quarter, took a very different approach than their American counterparts. Politicians of all stripes emphasized the relevance of fostering citizen trust in government, the importance of supporting one another, and resisting fear. These calls highlight what criminologists know to be important factors in both violence prevention and tempering punitive impulses, policies, and actions. The Norwegian government, more influenced by expert voices and research, not surprisingly takes a more social and ultimately preventative approach to violence reduction. Instead of emphasizing the role of the criminal justice system after tragedy strikes, Norwegian political elites maintain the need for widespread social supports.

EXPLAINING DIFFERENCE

The analysis of state talk between two disparate societies, the United States and Norway, provides a unique opportunity to better understand how statements by agents of the state express core cultural and political arrangements that have been theorized to influence crime and punishment. Socio-economic and political arrangements, reflective of the contexts in which they are embedded, shape the world view and preferences of those subject to them (Edlund 1999, Lacey 2008). Furthermore, state talk matters as a mechanism for maintaining the status quo. Agents of the state remind us how to react to crime. In light of differences across societies, we observe divergent trends in crime rates, types of crimes committed, criminal justice system arrangements, and punishment (Cavadino and Dignan 2006a).

Liberal Market Economies, also referred to as Liberal Welfare States, such as the United States are characterized by inequality, individualism, weak social solidarity, light touch regulation, weak coordination between social institutions, and higher feelings of insecurity and fear (Østerud 2008, Lacey 2008). These factors coalesce in toxic ways that impact both violence as well as harsh and counterproductive reactions to crime. Inequality fosters insecurity which in turn fosters fear which in turn erodes solidarity in ways that have dire consequences in terms of addressing crime.

Simon (2007), speaking to the American penchant for punitiveness, describes a social milieu 'governed through crime.' His core argument is that American democracy has been transformed and ultimately distorted by an overarching emphasis on crime control. The logic of crime control, according to Simon (2007) is so overwhelming and pervasive that it has seeped into and radically altered social institutions and the policies that govern them. This, he argues has shifted priorities and resources to crime control instead of social supports transforming the United States from social welfare to penal welfare. Wacquant (2009) also describes a situation in which societies in the neoliberal era are shifting from welfare to what he calls 'prisonfare.' Mary and Nagels (2012), describe this shift as the 'penalization of the social' noting that states, some more than others, are taking an increasingly criminal justice approach to social problems more broadly. They argue that this trend is most prevalent where neoliberal logics are strongest such as the United States. Scholars such as Currie (2004) and Winlow and Hall (2013) also link neoliberalism to a Darwinian social milieu characterized by a lack of concern for others. Central to the arguments proffered by these scholars is that the United States is experiencing a destruction of the social in favor of the exclusion and isolation of those deemed to be risky.

Returning to Simon (2007), we see that a key component of this shift described by a number of scholars pertains to the emphasis on risk and fear which has eroded democracy, diminished social trust, and depleted social capital. As Mary and Nagels (2012) remind us, state reliance on punitive responses to crime represent an effort to maintain legitimacy in the face of challenges stemming from the dismantling of the social at the behest of neoliberalism. Scholarship in this vein is vital in that a better understanding of the relationship between social conditions and punishment is integral to improving how societies respond to crime.

In contrast to the situation in the United States, Coordinated Market Economies also referred to as Social Democratic Welfare States, such as Norway, are characterized by greater stability and security achieved through greater social investment, cooperation between social institutions, a cultural emphasis on egalitarianism, trust in the state and each other, an ethos of inclusion and social solidarity, and low levels of fear (Østerud 2008, Lacey 2008, Karstedt 2015). These pro-social attributes are theorized to reduce both violence and punitive impulses (Pratt and Eriksson 2013). Green's (2008) work illustrates this finding in his analysis of responses to child-on-child homicide in England and Norway. Analyses such as these highlight the ways in which Scandinavian socio-economic political context shapes outcomes on the ground. Such institutional balance, largely favoring social intervention over criminal justice intervention to deal with social problems, promotes penal moderation in countries such as Norway (Lacey 2008, Kuhnle 2011). State talk in the present study both reflects and reinforces this. According to Loader (2010), restraint such as that called for by Norwegian political elites, is a key element of moderation.

Institutional Anomie Theory, seeking to better understand America's exceptional crime and punishment problems, also helps us to better understand divergent responses to crime across

societies. Messner and Rosenfeld (2007) posit that institutional balance shapes both crime and reactions to it. Kuhnle (2011) weighs in on the relationship between institutional design and reactions to crime observing that institutions shape our norms, trust, perceptions, and ultimately behavior. Institutional Anomie Theory argues that American exceptionalism in the realm of crime, particularly violence, is fueled by the dominance of the economy over other social institutions. Conversely, in countries such as Norway, where non-economic social institutions are stronger and less suffused with neoliberal logic, there is both less violence and less punishment (Currie 2015). This illustrates the importance of better understanding the cultural, economic, and political practices and values associated with societies in which both citizens and the state are less violent and more supportive.

CONCLUSION

How does state talk—conditioned by economic, political, and cultural forces—facilitate or constrain punitive responses to political mass shootings? This question, inspired by comparative criminological literature, asks us to consider the relationship between state talk, the forces which produce it, and outcomes using political mass shootings. The present study contributes to the literature surrounding American and Scandinavian Exceptionalism highlighting how different economic, political, and cultural attributes shape and are shaped by state discourse in ways that contribute to divergent responses to crime.

Political elites in the neoliberal United States which prioritizes a highly individualistic and competitive social order, speak about tragedy in highly individualistic and punitive terms. In contrast, their Norwegian counterparts having dedicated more resources to establishing and maintaining a strong social welfare state which serves as a buffer against the volatile global economy, speak in more collective terms about the greatest tragedy to befall Norway since Nazi

occupation in the Second World War. These remarkable differences highlighted in the present study reinforce comparative criminological literature exploring cross-cultural differences in responses to crime by applying what we know about the relationship between society, crime, and responses to crime. Work in this vein is critical in making the case for a social realm more conducive to more measured and effective responses to social problems such as crime.

CHAPTER 6

LIFE AFTER TRAGEDY: POLITICS AND MEMORY

And unfortunately, this pattern of spreading untruths about this legislation served a purpose, because those lies upset an intense minority of gun owners, and that in turn intimidated a lot of senators (White House 2013).

The response to the events of 22 July demonstrated the strong bonds we have as a nation. We stood up together for the values that are so important to us: democracy and freedom, openness and tolerance, solidarity and trust (Office of the Prime Minister 2015b)

INTRODUCTION

President Obama, expressing disappointment in a Congress that did not vote for gun-control, expresses frustration about the American political realm shaped by powerful special interests, such as the gun lobby. In Norway, where guns are not a cultural priority, Conservative Prime Minister Erna, continuing in her predecessor's footsteps, spoke to core, pro-social Norwegian values. These two statements highlight key differences in how each society reacted and continues to react to tragedy.

Both the January 8th attacks in the United States and the July 2nd attacks in Norway impacted the political and social landscape of the cultures in which they occurred. The political debates surrounding the causes of each shooting and the appropriate way to deal with the perpetrators ensued in each country. The tone and content of these conversations differs between in ways that reflect and reproduce pre-existing socio-economic and political arrangements. Looking to the social, memorials also shed light on differences between the United States and Norway.

SENTENCING POLITICALLY MOTIVATED MASS SHOOTERS

Following the January 8th attacks, politicians emphasized punishment for Loughner who they alternately referred to as "evil" and "mentally ill." The courts, deeming Loughner a paranoid schizophrenic, forcibly medicated him in an effort to render him competent to stand trial. Loughner was ultimately charged with five counts of killing federal government employees, attempts to kill government employees, the attempted assassination of a member of congress and the assassination of a federal judge. He responded with a not guilty plea (Maririon and Willard 2014). Although the Pima County prosecutors discussed the death penalty, Loughner was ultimately sentenced to seven consecutive life sentences in concert with 140 years without the possibility of parole (Cortese 2012).

In the wake of the July 22nd attacks, Norway has largely resisted treating Breivik as an exception to legal procedures, a point emphasized by the Foreign Minister who called on Norwegians to trust the system. This call to avoid exceptionalism in the Breivik case illustrates Loader's (2010) assertion that restraint is a key component of penal moderation in both rhetoric and practice. In the end, Breivik was sentenced to 21 years behind bars, the most severe sentence available in Norway (Husabø 2013, Pratt 2008). In the event that he is deemed a continued threat to society, Breivik can be detained longer with periodic reviews.

AMERICAN POLITICS POST JANUARY 8, 2011

Shortly after January 8th 2011, President Obama (White House 2013b) observed that "everybody talked about [how] we needed [to] change something after Tucson." The attack threw fuel on the already volatile gun debate and prompted a discussion of the state of mental health care in the United States (Amsden 2014). Notably lacking in American political discourse are discussions of broader, social preventive measures such as strengthening the social safety net

and fostering greater civility. Instead, both the gun control and mental health care debates are reignited periodically following each high profile mass shooting in the United States with little action being taken on either front.

Politicians, the media, and the public, all weigh in for and against gun control in the aftermath of each mass shooting. Predictably, mass shootings ignite a partisan battle followed by little in terms of concrete action aimed at addressing America's gun violence problem. As with other high profile mass shootings, the Tucson attacks prompted renewed bickering over gun control vs gun rights as well as the state of mental healthcare in the United States (Amsden 2014). Notably, opponents of gun control who fight to frame violence as the result of mental illness, have yet to propose and institute major advances in health care. Gun reform continues to be disputed fervently, often across political parties.

Throughout his presidency, given the frequency of mass shootings in the United States, Barrack Obama has made numerous speeches lamenting gun violence and advocating what he and allies term "common sense" gun laws. Highlighting four main areas, he advocates for (1) universal background checks, (2) restoring the ban on military-style assault weapons and extended, high capacity clips such as the one used by Loughner, (3) making schools safer, and (4) increasing access to mental health care (White House 2013g). These proposals, emerging after January 8th, have failed to pass through Congress as of 2016.

Figures such as President Obama and Principal Deputy Press Secretary Josh Earnest continually lament the influence of the pro-gun interest groups such as the National Rifle Association. Pro-gun groups, which fund election campaigns, work to propagate the idea that good guys with guns can stop bad guys with guns, claim that "an armed society is a polite society," stoke fears that people's guns will be taken away, and claim that gun control measures

would help to create a master database of gun owners. Politicians such as Arizona Congressman Trent Franks bring these views to lawmaking. President Obama (White House 2013b) calls claims such as these willful lies and misinformation designed to prevent "common sense" gun control mechanisms, supported by the majority of Americans. Such language illustrates how distorted American democracy is by lobbyists and their money.

In early 2016, in the context of congressional failure to take action against gun violence and the end of his second term, President Obama has taken action through executive order (White House 2016). Key elements of this action include: (1) applying checks to all transactions involving guns, even those at gun shows and through the internet (2) improving the FBI background check system to allow for 24/7 processing (3) improving communication between the FBI and local law enforcement regarding background checks (4) funding for 200 new ATF agents and to support the Internet Investigation Center tasked with tracking illegal online firearms trafficking (5) $500 million in new funding for mental health care (6) calling on the Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland security to research gun safety technology and (7) tasking the U.S. Attorney's Office with renewing work on addressing domestic violence. Opponents of gun-control have accused the President of abusing his power as well as violating the 2nd amendment right to bear arms.

Rumors of a national gun registry, a massive gun grab (in more paranoid fantasies, carried out by the military), and executive orders aimed at gun control are also propagated by politicians. These comments, which increasingly feel like part of the daily landscape of American life, proffered by citizens, the media, and politicians alike, tend to reach fever pitch in the aftermath of high profile instances of gun violence. Again and again, Americans hear the

predictable calls from the pro-gun lobby for more guns and the gun-control lobby's call for restrictions on guns with little change in either gun regulations or gun-violence.

The dystopian, black and white, us versus them, discourse following mass shootings taps into America's fearful psyche. State talk analyzed in the present study is rife with references to this reality. A German friend of mine once grimly observed that the United States is perhaps the only country in the industrialized world where people are too terrified to conduct the day to day business of shopping, going to school or work, seeing a movie, attending a family event, attending church, or going to sleep at night without being armed. In some cases, simply being armed is not enough. A segment of the American population stock piles weapons, some of which are military grade weapons explicitly designed to kill many people and kill them quickly. Similarly, British journalist Jonathan Jones (2016) laments that "America is so frightening to itself that people need guns to protect themselves from their neighbours…America, a fortress full of trigger-happy civil warriors." The presence of firearms in both private homes and public spaces increases not only the possibility of disputes escalating into homicide but also increases the chances of accidents and suicides. For every one person killed by firearms in America, five more are sent to the hospital bearing gunshot wounds (Currie 2015).

Given that it is estimated that the United States is averaging more than one mass shooting (often defined as the injury or death of four or more people) a day, the issue is rarely out of the public consciousness. Unfortunately, given the Congressional ban on funding gun research, we lack a comprehensive body of scholarly research on the subject. As a consequence, much of what we know about guns comes from Non-Governmental Organizations and media sources. This state of affairs is no accident but rather the result of the tremendous influence of the gun lobby over the government.

Nearly absent from the political discourse surrounding the January 8th attacks is the relationship between violent political rhetoric and physical violence (Boser and Lake 2014). Leading up to the 2011 Tucson shootings, political rhetoric in the U.S., mostly by Republicans, was suffused with gun rhetoric. Benson (2011: 24) describes a rhetorically violent political arena in the months leading up to the Tucson shootings. Examples of Second Amendment language, used primarily by Republicans, included phrases such as "lock and load," "reload," and "targeting" politicians in the opposing party. For instance, Sharon Angle, the republican contestant against Harry Reid (D-NV), made a name for herself during the 2010 election cycle speaking to "second amendment remedies."

> You know, our Founding Fathers, they put that Second Amendment in there for a good reason and that was for the people to protect themselves against a tyrannical government. And in fact, Thomas Jefferson said it's good for a country to have a revolution every 20 years. I hope that's not where we're going, but, you know, if this Congress keeps going the way it is, people are really looking toward those Second Amendment remedies and saying, "my goodness what can we do to turn this country around?" I'll tell you the first thing we need to do is take Harry Reid out (Lunceford 2011: 34).

Statements such as Angle's implicitly suggest that violence, specifically gun violence, is an appropriate and perhaps even laudable response to disagreement (Smith and Hollihan 2014). Violent political rhetoric, and advocating 'second amendment solutions' in particular, also suggests a segment of the population highly distrustful of both the government and democratic processes (Lunceford 2011). Furthermore, that politicians and political hopefuls advocate for violence against other politicians they disagree with illustrates that not even those in government trust the government. Language in this vein also reminds us of the link between distrust of the state and punitive impulses.

The January 8th attacks, despite opening a window of opportunity for discussion, failed to prompt leaders speaking after the attacks engage in a more civil discourse. Only President

Obama, speaking in passing, even mentions the toxic rhetoric of American politicians. He is careful to avoid making a strong statement on the correlation between violent discourse, which is highly normalized in the United States, and physical violence. Such a statement in the present environment, which privileges narratives of unpredictable, random evil in the world would likely instigate considerable backlash.

The United States will vote on its next leader in November 2016 as President Obama is nearing the end of his second term. Gun violence is shaping up to be a hot button issue in the campaign season which has already unfortunately seen multiple mass shootings. Republican and Democrat contenders frame the issue very differently. The treatment of gun control in the on-going election cycle is fueled by and simultaneously fueling America's long standing gun divide.

Republican candidates have publically dismissed gun control decrying what they see as a violation of the 2nd amendment. Presidential hopefuls on the Republican ticket compete to show voters who is more pro-gun. In August 2015, Ted Cruz showcased his dedication to both guns and patriotism by wrapping slices of bacon around the muzzle of an assault rifle to make what he calls Texas style bacon. Later, in December 2015, less than a week after a mass shooting which left 14 dead in San Bernardino, California, Ted Cruz proudly flaunted his love of firearms at a campaign event held at a gun shop and range in Iowa (Rucker and Sullivan 2015). Struggling contender Jeb Bush, who has since dropped out of the race, posted a picture of a hand gun with "Gov. Jeb Bush" etched into its surface on Twitter. Accompanying the picture was the simple caption "America." The picture prompted support for guns as a fundamental symbol for the country, amusement by those who pointed out that Bush's gun was manufactured in Belgium by a foreign company, and horror that America can be summed up by an instrument of death. Former candidate Rand Paul, arriving by helicopter at a gun range, unloaded an AR-15 into a

copy of the American tax code. Mike Huckabee and Rick Santorum also have posted images of themselves shooting at gun ranges in early voting states (Rucker and Sullivan 2015).

Ben Carson, another hopeful who has since dropped out of the race, has made a number of controversial comments regarding guns. Following a 2015 mass shooting at a college in Oregon, Carson proclaimed that had other students been armed it would not have happened. Furthermore, he would not have let someone shoot at him. Such statements, constituting victim blaming, imply that gun violence victims should fight back. This stands in contrast to his claims that when someone pulled a gun on him at a fast food restaurant decades ago he redirected the gun wielder to employees behind the counter (Williams 2015). Furthermore, Carson criticized President Obama for meeting with the victims of the Oregon mass shooting stating that "I mean, I would probably have so many things on my agenda that I would go to the next one," (Rappenport 2015). In a short sentence, Carson writes gun violence off as both a regular and ultimately unimportant occurrence. Similarly, framing gun violence as a normal and unpreventable part of the American experience, Jeb Bush remarked after the Oregon mass shootings that "Look, stuff happens" taking the position that gun violence is normal, inevitable, and not a matter of grave concern (Shear and Rappenport 2015). Carson (2015), further minimizing the damage that gun violence has done to Americans, also suggested that gun rights trump victims of gun violence in that

> As a Doctor, I spent many a night pulling bullets out of bodies. There is no doubt that this senseless violence is breathtaking – but I never saw a body with bullet holes that was more devastating than taking the right to arm ourselves away.

Carson also asserted that the Nazi party would not have risen to dominance in Germany had citizens been armed. This reading of history, hardly exclusive to Carson in right-wing

circles, fails to acknowledge that Hitler was democratically elected by the German people (Williams 2015).

In contrast, Democratic candidates, particularly Hillary Clinton, have supported gun control in the quest to quell the American violence problem. Contender Bernie Sanders, while not making gun rights a core component of his campaign, has not advocated as strongly for gun control as Hillary Clinton (Rucker and Sullivan 2015).

NORWEGIAN POLITICS POST JULY 22, 2011

At present, Norway has not responded to the terrorist attacks by treating the case as an exception or by passing laws that expand punishment or curb civil liberties (Greenwald 2011; Ottersen 2013). Speaking to this, the Minister of Justice and Public security in 2011 stated "it is possible to impose stricter surveillance measures and establish new physical lines of protection, but it is not a direction we want to pursue." Spaaij (2012: 91), emphasizing the conciliatory tone of Norwegian officials, has predicted that "although new security measures will most likely be implemented, authorities are well aware of the costs of such measures, which are deemed to fit uneasily within Norway's existing culture of openness and trust."

Former Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg (Office of the Prime Minister 2012b), reflecting on the attacks during a commemoration speech, treads the line between openness and securitization stating "There is no better protection against terrorism than openness, democracy and humanity. They do not make us invulnerable. We need a police force and surveillance systems. The equipment, determination and will to stop those who would resort to violence." In a similar vein, Store (Minister of Foreign Affairs 2012), also speaks of balancing openness and security stating "This is not a soft approach. It requires and allows for tough security measures. But it is firmly anchored in the rule of law and the values of democracy and accountability."

Similarly, then Defense Minister Roger Ingebrigste (Ministry of Defense 2011) states

> In the aftermath of such a national trauma, it is critical that society does not alter its open and free ways. In Norway we are proud of our open and free democracy. It is inclusive and strong. Justice must be served, the rule of law upheld, and government must not limit the freedoms of its citizens. There is always a balance that needs to be struck between security and freedom.

Pakes and Holt (2015) also observe that Norwegian officials have expressed reluctance towards more punitive policies. Lacey (2010) posits that highly coordinated states such as Norway, even in the face of tragedies that could fuel an upsurge of law and order politics, are often able to retain some semblance of restraint. Points such as these highlight the importance of culture in moderating or exacerbating responses to crime.

Ultimately, Norway's more careful and measured response to terrorism may speak to Norway's self-image as a leader in social welfare and penal moderation, points of national pride (Loader 2010). Summarizing, Holt (cited in Brown 2011) observes that "…the Norwegian soul is egality, openness, and a very low security level. I think that we have lost some of our greatest values if we really have to change these things." Similarly, Norwegian Criminologist Nils Christie (cited in Pratt and Eriksson 2013: 208) comments that "what has happened is a catastrophe that can only be met by holding on to the foundational values of Norwegian society. If we abandon those, then Breivik has achieved something." These statements in the media echo government calls for adherence to Norwegian culture and due process illustrated by this study.

Seeking to better understand what happened and how such tragedies can be better prevented and responded to in the future, the government assembled a commission to analyze the attacks. From this commission, 31 recommendations emerged. Examples include: restrictions on semi-automatic weapons, improved police helicopter capacity, and a rethinking of police working hours which tend to mimic regular office hours. In response to the Commission's

recommendations, Stoltenberg pledged boosting military and police funding and training and anti-terror measures (Syse 2014). Recommendations such as these do highlight the need to be cognizant of the ways in which securitization could manifest itself in the Norwegian case.

Although there are some indications that the Norwegian government has responded to the attacks in a more moderate and measured way than counterparts elsewhere, it is important to continue to monitor policy and practice developments. In the aftermath of the July 22nd attacks, scholars such as Husabø (2013) and Fimreite and colleagues (2013) note that there has been talk of expanding 2004 terrorism legislation to explicitly address "lone wolf" terrorists such as Breivik. The Norwegian Police Service and Ministry of Justice have also proposed a variety of legal changes that would expand the focus on preparatory acts and increased surveillance (Husabø 2013). Furthermore, a proposed increase in the maximum Norwegian prison sentence from 21 to 30 years has also been debated (Fimreite et al. 2013). Taking a more moderate approach, the 22 July commission has emphasized improving coordination more than changing the criminal law, urging consistency between words and actions as well as caution (Husabø 2013, Fimreite et al. 2013). Calls for alertness to signs of extremism, better preparation for terrorist attacks, increased visibility of police, and better equipment have also been made (Christensen et al. 2013). Evidence of an increased emphasis on 'security' can also be seen in state talk stemming from the new Conservative administration surrounding the rebuilding of the government complex which was partially destroyed by Breivik. The Norwegian government, in response to the attacks, has created a new security agency tasked with protecting the government complex.

Though the Norwegian response to the attacks perpetrated by Breivik largely evidences possible constraints on punitiveness, it is still important acknowledge possible facilitators of

punitiveness in post-Breivik rhetoric and action. For instance, despite a relatively healthy

economy and praise for Stoltenberg's leadership, the Conservative Party, headed by Erna

Solberg, was voted into office in September 2013 for the first time since 1990 shifting the long

standing balance of political power in Norway (Bevanger 2013a; Bevanger 2013b, Pakes and

Holt 2015). Conservatives ran on a platform advocating for reduced taxes and increased

privatization, two points that may undermine the welfare state (Koranyi and Rouche 2013).

Though the leading party changed following the attacks, Green (2009) reminds us that, given

already established consensus, such changes usually proceed relatively smoothly.

Since the attacks, the Progress Party itself has notably softened its anti-Islamic rhetoric in

an effort to rebrand itself as a more mainstream right leaning party. In spite of initial backlash

towards the Progress Party in the wake of the attacks, they have gained ground in parliament

(Associated Press 2013; Bevanger 2013a). All parties, not wanting to be accused of exploiting

the attacks for political gain, have largely avoided directly discussing the attacks (Holt 2011;

Associated Press 2013). However, the attacks have been indirectly invoked to promote

investment in roads, police, and helicopters (Associated Press 2013). The concerted effort (at

least in name) to avoid direct use of the tragedy to garner political capital speaks to the more

restrained nature of Norway's political culture and response to the attacks.

In forming a centre-right coalition, the Conservative Party has aligned with the populist

anti-immigrant Progress Party that Breivik was once a member of (Bevanger 2013a). In total,

seven cabinet positions, including the Minister of Justice, are occupied by members of the

Progress Party. Minister of Justice, Anders Anundsen, has been a driving force in creating

prisons designed specifically for immigrants and foreigners as well as negotiating a deal for the

export of prisoners from Norway to the Netherlands. There has also been a spike in deportations

since the elections. At the end of 2014, Amundsen was called to the Stortinget following

controversy surrounding the deportation of asylum seeking minors. Some leaders, even those

within his own party, have called for a new Minister of Justice (Pakes and Holt 2015).

REMEMBERING JANUARY 8, 2011

The Tucson shootings by Jared Loughner reverberated across the country as horrified

people across the world mourned the dead and injured, including Representative Gabby Giffords.

Three spontaneous, makeshift memorials were erected in Tucson after the tragedy: one outside of

Giffords office, one at the Safeway grocery store where the shooting took place, and one at the

hospital were victims were treated. In total, over 5,000 tokens of remembrance including flags,

flowers, signs, stuffed animals, and candles were placed at the three sites (Duarte 2015).

Thousands of items have been catalogued for future generations, some slated for display in a

history museum planned in the old Pima City Courthouse (The January 8th Memorial Foundation

2015).

In addition to spontaneous pop up memorials, several organizations have been founded to

commemorate the January 8th tragedy in the long term. In honor of Gabe Zimmerman, one of

Gifford's staffers who died in the attack, family members created the BEYOND organization to

organize memorial events aimed at encouraging community members to come to together to

move beyond the tragedy. Events organized by the organization focus on getting people outside

and physically active to promote health (BEYOND b). The family of the youngest victim also

created the Christina-Taylor Green foundation in memorial. For three years, the foundation

worked to care for the less fortunate as well as promote athletics, the arts, and academics. The

foundation was started using donations to the victim donation fund created in Christina's name

by the Community Foundation of Southern Arizona (Innes 2014). Gabby Giffords and her

husband Mark Kelly created Americans for Responsible Solutions on the 2nd anniversary of the tragedy to promote "common sense" gun control in the face of Congressional inaction. Though Giffords and Kelly are careful to assert their support for the 2nd amendment and gun ownership for recreation, hunting, and protection, they assert that there is a great need for greater controls in an effort to staunch America's gun violence problem. Their goal is to provide a counter weight, politically and financially, to the gun lobby which has notable influence over American politics (Americans for Responsible Solutions).

On the fourth anniversary of the Tucson tragedy, January 8th 2015, various memorial events took place including bell ringing ceremonies. Gabby Giffords and her husband Mark Kelly were presented with one of the flags raised at a makeshift memorial created in Tucson. They raised the flag, received the flag from Tucson's January 8th Memorial Foundation, at their home in tribute to the victims of the tragedy. Events in 2016 included a memorial walk at the Christina Taylor Green Memorial Park named for the youngest victim of the attacks, nature hikes, run/walk events, bike rides, and events hosted by museums throughout the city (Beyond a).

Tucson's 8th January Foundation whose moto is "together we thrive" formed in February 2012. Survivors, family members, and community members banded together to work on a permanent memorial to remember those who were injured or killed during the assassination attempt against Congresswoman Giffords. The organization is in charge of raising the funds, meeting with and considering the needs of various stakeholders, and researching other memorial events (Tucson's 8th January Foundation 2015a). After evaluating plans from 60 teams, the foundation selected 4 finalists for consideration (Tucson's 8th January Foundation 2015b).

REMEMBERING JULY 22, 2011

     In the weeks following the attacks, spontaneous memorials appeared throughout Norway in response to Breivik's attacks (KORO Public Art Norway). Various memorial events were also held in the days after the attacks. On July 25th 2011, an estimated 200,000 people participated in a rose march to the main square in Oslo. On July 30th 2011, a memorial concert titled Mitt Lille Land, roughly translated to "my small country" was held at an Oslo cathedral. The national memorial ceremony took place on August 21st 2011. Then Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg and other political leaders spoke at individual funerals honoring the victims (Syse 2014).

     Over the years, various events have commemorated the horrible twin attacks. In April 2012, on the 9th day of the trial, an estimated 40,000 gathered with roses to sing a song classified as Marxist propaganda by Breivik titled "Children of the Rainbow," a Norwegian version of Pete Seeger's "My Rainbow Race." (Syse 2014). On July 22nd 2015, Prime Minister Erna Solberg and Former Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg spoke at the memorial service in the government quarter while the Bishop of Oslo Ole Christian Kvarme led the service at the Oslo Cathedral (The Local No 2015).

     In 2012, the government began soliciting proposals for permanent memorial sites in the Hole municipality and the government quarter in Oslo. The Utøya Island memorial, designed by Swedish artist Jonas Dahlberg, calls for the removal of part of the island to form a passage through the earth to be transferred to the memorial site in the government quarter. The design seeks to link both scenes of horrific violence. Slicing into the earth to remove the rock will create a physical wound in the earth signifying the loss and pain evoked by the July 22nd attacks. The more easily accessible site in Oslo will likely be the site of official commemoration events for years to come. The memorials are slated for completion on July 22nd 2016 (KORO Public Art

Norway). The memorial opening has been delayed in the wake of controversy surrounding the

cutting of the earth in Hole municipality as residents have sued to block construction (The Local

NO 2014).

Hough 2002). To better understand state talk, it is important to consider the context in which it is embedded.

Sparks (2006: 47) asks us to consider two interrelated questions: "what kind of people are we being encouraged to be by these discourses?" and "what sorts of governance are we persuaded to accept?" He reminds us of the critical need to link talk to action. It is my hope that the present study helps to shed light on both of these questions posed by Sparks (2006). To this end, I argue for the need to study the culturally contingent nature of state reactions to tragedies. In particular, criminologists need to pay careful attention to how underlying economic, political, and cultural factors may serve to either constrain or facilitate punitive responses to crime, and more broadly, other social problems (Lacey 2008; Barker 2009; Loader 2010). This is crucial in that we often focus our attention on cases where panic, stoked by state talk and media coverage, erupts in the aftermath of high profile tragedy. Indeed, some of the key criticisms leveled at work focused on the United States, such as Garland's (2001) 'culture of control' and Simon's (2007) 'governing through crime', concern the applicability of their findings across cultures. In line with scholars such as Green (2009), and Cavadino and Dignan (2006), I believe there is a great need for attentiveness to the factors underlying both incendiary and less incendiary government talk. Such a comparative focus is crucial in working towards a better understanding of the role of government rhetoric in shaping responses to crisis. Through this understanding, it is my hope that we can move towards more productive, and just ways of governing.

The present study, focusing on United States and Norway, two countries with divergent socio-economic and political conditions, illustrates different approaches to crisis management focusing on themes thought to constrain (trust in government, social solidarity, and refusal to succumb to fear) or facilitate (distrust in government, social division, and fear) punitive

responses to crime. State talk, verbal, written and symbolic communications produced and

disseminated by state actors, composed of government issued speech transcripts, press releases,

op-eds and the like, serves as a way to better understand the link between context, state talk, and

action.

In the American case, officials speak to the highly individualistic nature of American

society. For example, political elites often speak in punitive tones emphasizing the unrelenting

and inherent "evil" of Loughner, the perpetrator. Mental illness, another prevalent subject

discussed by a range of actors, also speaks to the emphasis on individuals at the expense of the

social when trying to make sense of tragedy in the American context. Also shifting attention

away from collective solutions to violence such as the politically mass motivated shootings

perpetrated by Loughner is the emphasis on violence as both random and unpreventable. This

rhetorical vein also serves to shift public attention away from the responsibility of the state and

collective, blinding us to proactive measures that could be taken to identify and help fellow

citizens in trouble. Furthermore, staunch opponents of gun control also shift attention away from

collective and proactive measures to bolster gun control in an effort to focus on the individual,

unpreventable, evil of bad guys with guns. Finally, the overarching call for punitive and

exclusionary punishment for Loughner illustrates the highly individualistic treatment of crime in

the United States. This approach to crisis management identified in the present study is fed by a

socio-economic cultural ethos of personal responsibility and an 'every man for himself'

mentality. This mindset narrows the range of possibilities available to address violence.

In writing off prevention in favor of an 'evil happens and we are powerless to stop it'

world view, Americans are ill equipped to collectively implement social policies and supports for

each other. While this is the present situation, it is worth noting that there have been periods

throughout where American's have worked together to improve conditions. In the 1930s, in the context of the Great Depression, there was bipartisan support for New Deal policies that helped to reduce poverty, increase incomes, and reduce inequality (Massey 2007). Following World War II, veterans, albeit only white males, were eligible for college support and home loans which helped to carve out a middle class (Massey 2007, Currie 2004). In the 1970s, following the election of Ronald Reagan, bipartisan policies have dismantled the social safety net and increased inequality which have contributed to late modern anxieties (Massey 2007, Young 2007). It remains to be seen whether the present economic crisis will inspire Americans to take better care of one another.

Although, in both cases, officials speak to factors thought to constrain punitive reactions, the way in which they do so differs markedly. Throughout the American case, officials spoke to constraints such as social solidarity and resisting the impulse to succumb to fear in the aftermath of the attacks in highly individualistic terms. Looking at social solidarity, political leaders of all stripes called upon their fellow Americans to keep victims in their thoughts and prayers, sometimes opening and ending statements with this call. Speaking to resisting the impulse to succumb to fear, politicians praised individual heroes who helped to protect others, administer medical care, and attempt to stop Loughner. Rarely, did state actors call upon the American people to remain calm and avoid rash action.

In sharp contrast to the punitive highly individualistic state talk deployed by agents of the state in the United States, Norwegian officials speak of the need to adhere to the Norwegian values of inclusion and open democracy while avoiding the pitfalls of rash, punitive punishment and policy change. Norwegian politicians, citing the lessons of harsher reactions taken elsewhere, namely in the United States, reject punitive and exceptional treatment of the most

violent members of society. Throughout the documents, Norwegian officials focused on speaking to citizens in more collective terms than their American counterparts. Also notable is that attitudes towards immigrants and foreigners markedly improved, at least for a short while, after the attacks by Breivik who operated under the auspices of white supremacy. Norwegians actively rejected Breivik's cause (Pakes and Holt 2015).

Speaking to the Norwegian response to the attacks, Pratt and Eriksson (2013) end their comparison of what they term Anglophone excess and Nordic exceptionalism with two powerful observations. The first, that when tested, core Norwegian values were not only reasserted but arguably strengthened in the aftermath of the attacks. Second, they argue that the response of politicians and citizens alike drew upon these core values highlighting divergent ways of responding to crime and considering punishment. The Norwegian case also illustrates how feelings of national pride and shame can be mobilized in ways that help to establish and/or maintain moderation and to resist securitization in the face of tragedy (Loader 2012; Holt cited in Brown 2011).

Overwhelmingly, officials have called upon Norwegians to refuse being controlled by fear. Instead of calling for revenge and enhanced punishment in the aftermath of the attacks, the government has focused largely on the need for conciliatory responses. Both resisting fear and striving for peacemaking responses represent important strategies (Spaaij 2012). Given the important role that government talk plays in shaping responses to crime, it is particularly important to pay attention to cases in which more moderate talk is deployed by agents of the state and how culture and social structure make such talk possible.

In addition to outlining the contours of state talk and working to better understand the way in which context conditions such talk, it is important to consider the ways in which state

responses to national tragedies impact political and cultural life. In the American case, we see

politicians of both parties, use January 8th and the seemingly endless stream of mass shootings

perpetrated since as an opportunity to paint the opposition in a negative light. The most glaring

example of this competitive struggle is in the area of gun control where both sides fight bitterly.

Moving into 2016, little has changed regarding gun control and violence in America.

In contrast, Norwegian officials called for restraint and adherence to procedural law in

adjudicating Breivik. Furthermore, political elites called Norwegians to reject the highly punitive

and exclusionary measures preferred by countries such as the United States which they argue

empower extremists. Instead, Norwegians were called upon to uphold values of solidarity and

supportive social institutions. Political hopefuls proceeded with caution approaching the 2012

elections as no party wanted to be accused of using the tragedy to score cheap shots.

An area in which we see more convergence between the United States and Norway is in

the way both have commemorated January 8th and July 22nd. In both countries, spontaneous

memorials were erected as a place for people to gather and lay tokens of remembrance.

Furthermore, pains have been taken to construct permanent memorials where people can gather

to pay their respects to the fallen and remind future generations of the painful violence

perpetrated in both cases.

The present analysis of government talk here links the mobilization of core values such as

trust in the government and solidarity to the response of the government to the attacks. The

central argument is that state talk both reflects and reinforces the status quo. This status quo is

shaped by underlying socio-economic and political values and institutions embedded within

societies. In analyzing differences between state talk proffered by officials in two countries with

different socio-economic and political contexts, we can better understand the conditions that

shape state talk and subsequent action and think about what can be done to promote kinder and more productive ways of governing.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Analysis of state talk in the United States and Norway reveals profound differences in the tone and content, reflective of the larger context in each country. These differences draw our attention to more productive ways of coping with crisis and the cultural, economic, and political forces that underlie these responses. Comparative work in this vein is critical in developing both more productive responses to crime and to reducing violence.

Studies comparing Anglo-Saxon countries such as the United States and Scandinavian countries such as Norway illuminate kinder, more moderate responses to social problems such as crime. The present analysis of how governments talk about crime gives us ideas on what works and what does not work. Insights such as these are crucial in furthering both criminology and policy (Currie 2015). Here, thinking about policy responses to mass shootings, the focus is two pronged: (a) strengthening social supports and (b) gun control.

In the United States, highly individualized talk surrounding mass shootings focuses on the randomness of violence, evil, mental illness, harsh punishment, and an inability to prevent violence. These themes resonate in a society that believes that crime is the result of wickedness, lax morals, and an insufficiently punitive state response. Politicians reinforce these cultural myths (Beckett 1997). Such language drastically narrows policy possibilities by shifting attention from social to individual solutions. In contrast, Norwegian political elites call for calm, solidarity, the maintenance of a universal social welfare state, and support for those in trouble. Themes such as these emphasize the need to prevent violence collectively and the importance of

strong social supports and institutions. Such talk broadens policy choices by prioritizing a wide range of social responses to social problems.

The United States, following January 8th, has continued to be plagued by mass shootings, some of them politically motivated. In contrast, Norway has yet to experience an episode of mass violence after July 22nd. As Currie (2015: 5) compellingly argues "…violent crime is not only a social problem and an economic problem, not only a public health problem or a problem for criminal justice agencies, but alas a *moral* problem—especially because it is largely a *preventable* problem." State talk emanating from the United States and Norway concretely illustrates this point. While United States political elites frame violence as random and unpreventable, their Norwegian counterparts emphasize the power of social values and policies in preventing violence.

Cross-national data clearly illustrates that violent crime is often highly correlated with other social ills. Higher rates of infant mortality, poverty, inequality, unemployment, marginal employment, and familial strain all cluster with violence. The United States, which ranks poorly in these areas in comparison to other industrialized nations (particularly the Nordic countries and Japan), also experiences substantially more violence than its peers.

Another area of social policy in which the United States is lagging far behind Norway and other peers is criminal justice policy. American rhetoric and media coverage are permeated by the belief that leniency fosters crime. As such, much policy is undergirded by a philosophy that the best way to handle crime is to get tougher. While appealing in a hyper individualized society, cross-national data reveals a correlation between harsh, inhumane, and exclusionary criminal justice policy and violence. In low violence countries such as Norway, we see lower rates of imprisonment, the abolition of the death penalty, and more inclusive social policies

(Currie 2015, Tonry 2004). These observations draw our attention to the intertwining nature of social and crime policy.

Social policies emphasizing support and inclusion reduce social suffering in ways that lessen violence, particularly lethal violence (Currie 2015). Investment in family leave, child care, education, health care, and other social goods regarded as fundamental in other societies would bring the United States closer in line with its lower violence industrialized peers. Policies and values aimed at mutual support and ensuring all members of society have a basic standard of living are key to reducing social strain and soothing insecurities stemming from volatile capitalism. These points are echoed by the architects of Institutional Anomie Theory, Messner and Rosenfeld (2007), who argue that empowering other social institutions and addressing economic inequality is critical to reducing violence in the American case. I would add, in line with Currie (2015), that the way forward in fostering more humane and productive responses to crime is to strengthen social supports more generally. Only through rebalancing social institutions and cultural shifts in defining what is important can we hope to progress.

Linking cross-national data to theoretical insights, Institutional Anomie Theory argues that societies in which the economy dominates and permeates other social institutions are likely to have higher rates of crime, specifically violent crime (Messner and Rosenfeld 2007). Currie (1997), mapping the contours of the market society, also posits that societies in which there is rampant inequality, weak social supports, an ethos of social Darwinism, and the poorly regulated proliferation of firearms have higher rates of violence.

The emphasis on social solutions using the criminal justice system as a last resort as in the Norwegian case over highly individualistic solutions favored in the American case is supported by a wide range of criminologists (see e.g. Currie 1997; 2004; 2015; Messner and

Rosenfeld 2007, Wacquant 2009, Green 2008, Pratt 2008, Pratt and Eriksson 2011/2013, Lappi-Seppälä, Tapio 2007/2008/ 2012, Lacey 2008, Kuhnle 2011, Loader 2010, Reiman and Leighton 2010, Snacken 2010, and Spaaij 2012). These scholars and many more highlight the pitfalls of highly individualistic, reactive responses to crime typified by the United States. Furthermore, their work illustrates more hopeful ways forward using social supports to buffer citizens against inequality, fear, and a lack of solidarity while simultaneously bolstering state legitimacy.

Another critical consideration in light of the drastic differences in violence between the United States and Norway is gun policy. In the United States, the right to bear arms is a constitutional right and seen as a core element of American culture. This is not the case in other industrialized societies, Norway included. In contrast to other societies, which have tightened gun laws in recent decades, the United States has made acquiring a gun and using it increasingly easy. The proliferation of guns coupled with rampant inequality is a toxic mix (Currie 2015).

In sum, scholars seem to be calling for a more Scandinavian approach to social welfare in an effort ameliorate the criminogenic and punitive impulses generated by unfettered neo-liberal capitalism in the United States. These calls highlight the importance of social solutions to social problems. As Kuhnle (2011) reminds us, economic equality and strong welfare provisions are strongly correlated to lower rates of lethal violence, including mass shootings of the type central to the present work. Linking these observations to concrete cases such as has been done in the present study, is critical to shifting discourse and governance in a more pro-social direction. It is comparative work in this vein that stretches our social imaginations beyond 'what is' to 'what could be.'

FUTURE RESEARCH

As Lacey (2010) implores us, it is critical that we work to better understand the relationship between socio-political cultural arrangements and reactions to crime if we want to understand how state institutions might be remodeled to curb penal excess. It is my hope that this exploration of different state reactions and their social-political ramifications in the context of politically motivated mass shootings helps contribute to this line of work.

State talk, a much talked about but little studied area of criminology, is but one piece of the puzzle in better understanding why some states respond more punitively to crime than others. Certainly, there is great need to further contextualize state talk by situating it the broader context of public opinion and media as all three are interdependent and relevant to advancing what we know about crime and justice and drafting solutions to the problems that societies face.

Thinking about the United States, where mass shootings (politically motivated or not) occur with relative frequency, future work would do well to examine the string of violence in this vein that continues to add fuel to the long fiery and contentious gun debate. Such work would help to better contextualize the January 8th attacks as well as contribute to a richer understanding of the way in which state talk shapes governance. Longitudinal analysis is also valuable in that it sheds light on both continuity and change over time regarding what is said about crime. Such research can also capture differences and similarities in state talk across changes in leadership.

Regarding the Norwegian case, analysis of media commentary around the incident and public opinion surveys is also necessary to develop a more comprehensive understanding of July 22nd. This work is important to flesh out what the attacks might mean moving forward. Pakes and Holt (2015: 8) remind us that while the Norwegian response to the tragedies really is quite

remarkable in its emphasis on positive themes such as restraint, trust, and inclusion, it remains important to monitor outcomes given the tendency for violence of this kind to "…result in a spur towards punitive and vengeance-oriented politics." Indeed, some have noted that although initial coverage was largely favorable, Norwegian language media sources became more critical over time (Christensen et al. 2013). Finally, more research is needed on how elites were able to avoid using exceptional powers in the face of the attacks. Drawing on Green (2007), one possible explanation underlying the persuasiveness of the voices of the elites may be that that they were able to tap into larger cultural themes that resonated with the Norwegian public, such as trust, inclusion and social solidarity, and political legitimacy, all themes considered in the present work.

It is also important to remember, in considering the results presented in the current study, that talk is not always indicative of action (Garland 2001). As such, it is important to consider long term outcomes in the realms of policy and practice when assessing the impact of January 8th and July 22nd on the United States and Norway respectively. In other words, does state talk reflect action? Addressing this question is key to improving our understanding punitiveness.

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Waggoner, Kimberlee G. (2015). "What can Government Talk Tell us about Punitiveness? The Case of Norway Post 22 July, 2011." *Criminology & Criminal Justice.*