The Lindt café siege

The role of the consultant psychiatrist

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The Lindt café siege
The role of the consultant psychiatrist

Introduction
• definition of terrorism, radicalisation
• five young Australian domestic Islamist terrorists, common features

Man Haron Monis
• compare his behaviour and actions with domestic Islamist terrorists
• conclusion: Monis was not a “terrorist”

The role of the consultant psychiatrist
• advice of so-called “UK experts” and the “senior Sydney psychiatrist”
• NSW Coroner’s criticism of the consultant psychiatrist: ill-informed, unfair
Terrorism – definition

use of threatened or actual violence
through fear, coercion or intimidation
to attain a wider political / social goal (instrumental)

eg. make a government / organisation
   • do / not do some act

eg. destabilize / destroy a political or social structure

Target of terrorism

usually non-combatants (victims not directly involved in policy making)
   • most commonly, the civilian population
Terrorism – definition

Bruce Hoffman  *Inside Terrorism* (2017)

Terrorism is violence  “political in its aims and motives”
• “far-reaching psychological repercussions”
  beyond immediate victims or targets
• perpetrated by individuals / small collection of individuals
  influenced, motivated or inspired by the
  **ideological aims** of some **existent** terrorist movement
• seeks to affect change through the intimidation
  of a wider  “**target audience**” of “**non-combatants**”
**Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth) s. 100.1**

*terrorist act* - an action done or a threat made with the intention of

- advancing a political, religious or ideological *cause*
- coercing, or influencing by intimidation,

the government of the Commonwealth or a State, Territory or foreign country or intimidating the public or a section of the public

the “cause” cannot be equivocal, ill-defined or abstract

any violent activity, protest simply fuelled by grievance is not a “terrorist act”
Radicalization

process by which beliefs and motivations of an individual or group
• changes to “an extremist viewpoint”
• willing to countenance or engage in violence in pursuit of their goals

Islamist radicalization

identify with “an imagined global Muslim community”
global injustice against Muslims
• jihadist propaganda on internet, social media
Radicalization trajectory – common themes

perception of grievance
  - conflicted identities, injustice, oppression, social exclusion
  - make an individual receptive to extremist ideas

adopt extremist narrative or ideology
  - speaks to the grievance
  - provides a compelling rationale for what needs to be done

social and group dynamics
radicalisation often occurs in a dense, small network of friends
extremist ideas more likely to resonate if articulated by credible/charismatic leader
Islamic State captures Mosul, Iraq
12 June 2014
Islamic State, Caliph Ibrahim

Abu Bakr al Baghdadi

4 July 2014

Grand Mosque, Mosul, Iraq
Islamic State videos - beheading of captured American journalists
Operation Appleby
18 September 2014
foiled a plot to “commit violent acts”
Islamic State spokesperson Abu Muhammad al-Adnani
22 September 2014

“true believers … across the world”
defend Islamic State against the “dozens of nations … gathered against it”

“If you can kill a disbelieving American or European – especially the spiteful and filthy French – or an Australian, or a Canadian, or any other disbeliever from the disbelievers waging war, including the citizens of the countries that entered into a coalition against the Islamic State, then rely upon Allah, and kill him in any manner or way however it may be.”
Abdul Numan Haider
18-year-old
refugee from Afghanistan

Al-Furqan Islamic Centre
Neil Prakash
Abu Khaled al-Cambodi
Islamic State recruiter
Abdul Numan Haider
23 September 2014
shot dead by counter-terrorist officers

*shahada:* “There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is the messenger of God”
Farhad Jabar
2 October 2015
15 year old school boy

shot, killed Curtis Cheng
police headquarters, Parramatta
Farhad Jabar

“Soon by the will of God ... your nights will turn into nightmares, your days into hell.

By the will of Allah I have come today to put terror into your hearts and soon the majahideen will do the same, by the will of Allah.”
Sevdet Besim
oath of allegiance to al-Baghdadi
martyrdom message
ANZAC Day 2015
run down, behead a policeman
Sevdet Besim
martyrdom message

“In the name of Allah the beneficent, the Merciful, a while ago world leaders declared war on Islam and Muslims, invading lands, dividing us into separate nations, installing puppets, killing and torturing Muslims.

This war had always had an impact on me, however recently my brother Numan (may Allah accept him) carried out his attack, this opened my eyes up to the reality of who the enemy is. Since then a growing feeling within me had led me to decide to carry out my own.

To establish my jihad in Australia, to fight the oppressors, those who have implemented man-made law, to fight to make Allah’s word known and the highest, to defend Islam and put fear into those who are enemies to Allah and his religion Insha’Allah.”
Features of Islamic State-inspired terrorists

down-load extremist sermons, speeches
access on-line Islamic State propaganda
view violent extremist videos - bombings, shootings, beheadings
network, communicate with other jihadists by encrypted apps
develop on-line or social media “foot-print”
broadcast an intent (“leakage”) to commit a terrorist attack
pledge loyalty to Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi (caliph of Islamic State)
use images of Islamic State flag
leave a terrorist or propaganda message
martyrdom message or video
Man Haron Monis – at the time of the siege

**Convictions** - sending offensive letters to families of Australian soldiers
- appeal dismissed by the High Court

**Sexual Offences** as “spiritual healer”
- on bail, multiple charges

**Domestic Violence**
- lost custody of Australian-born children

**Accessory to Murder** of former partner

**“Muslim cleric”** - fraudulent
- internet, websites and social media
  - no evidence of contact with Islamic State or other terrorist organisation
    - 12 followers on Twitter
Lindt Café siege – Martin Place, Sydney
December 2014
NSW Coroner's Inquest

how the deaths occurred / whether they could have been prevented or avoided

circumstances of Monis being on bail, at the time of the siege

- multiple sex offences
- charges relating to murder of his ex-wife
Man Haron Monis – in Iran

19 May 1964 – born in western Iran
Masters in Islamic Culture and Political Science
1994 attended divinity school, “authority on Islam”
1996 manager of travel agency

1 October 1996 from Iran, applied for short stay business visa
  • falsely described himself as “legal consultant”
  • purpose of visit “meet with the BHP Billiton”

10 October 1996 ASIO assessed his application
  non-prejudicial assessment, Dept Immigration granted visa
Man Haron Monis – arrives in Australia

26 October 1996  left without telling wife, employer
28 October 1996  arrived in Sydney
18 November 1996  applied for protection visa

Monis’ ex-wife in Iran
“cruel, violent”
“he wasn’t religious”
“… it was all an act “
Man Haron Monis – Protection Visa

April 1997 Amnesty International supported claims
  • prisoner of conscience
  • if forced to return to Iran
    • may be arrested, ‘prisoner of conscience’
    • tortured, executed

25 July 2000 ASIO advised Immigration Department
  • not a direct / indirect risk to national security
Monis interviewed by Immigration Department – September 1997

NSW Coroner noted transcript of the interview:
- performed poorly during the interview
- answers to searching questions lacked coherence
- when pressed to clarify, changed parts of his account

Immigration Department reviewed application
- discussed with ASIO
- perceived lack of credibility of Monis’ claims

23 August 2000 living in Perth WA
- granted Protection Visa
Man Haron Monis – protest outside Parliament House, Perth

November 2000
Man Haron Monis – protest outside Parliament House, Sydney

January 2001
Man Haron Monis – “Spiritual Consultation”

2001 registered a number of businesses
- “spiritual consulting” “spiritual healing”
  - astrology, numerology, meditation
  - “black magic”

alleged first sexual assault of 27-yr-old woman

advertised in local ethnic newspapers
- preyed on vulnerable women
- “treatment”
  - undressing, paint with water
  - massage breasts and genitals
  - photographs, videos
INTERPOL – Tehran

April 2001 advised INTERPOL Canberra
Monis wanted for “fraud-related offences”
equivalent to A$500,000
provisional arrest, extradition

Australian Immigration
• repeated requests to INTERPOL Tehran
• provide relevant documentation
• no extradition agreement

no arrest warrant or details of specific charges ever received from Iran
September 2001
Sunni *al-Qaeda* terrorist attack
**Noleen Pal**

20 yr-old Fijian-Indian
advertisement about “spiritual healing”

made appointment with 39 yr-old Monis
• relationship began
• **February 2003** engaged
• Monis moves into her home in Sydney

**Further sexual offences**
**Not charged until 2014**
Noleen Pal – ceremonial wedding

August 2003 wedding
Monis still married to wife in Iran

September 2003 travel to Fiji

2004 first son born
2008 second son born
  • domestic violence

June 2010 separated from Monis
Man Haron Monis – Australian citizen

1 September 2004 ASIO formally advised Immigration
not a direct or indirect risk to national security

16 September 2004 citizenship application approved
20 October 2004 granted Australian citizenship
private ceremony for "security reasons"
London bombings – 7 July 2005
Glasgow Airport terrorist attack – 30 June 2007
Dr Haneef – Indian-born Muslim

5 July 2007 working at Gold Coast Hospital
distant relative of two terror suspects
• preparing to leave Australia
• arrested at Brisbane airport
• suspicion of terror-related activities
  • prolonged detention without charge
Complaint to Channel 7 – *Sunrise* programme

5 July 2007 “Sheikh Haron”
- first letter of complaint to Channel 7
- academic on the “Sunrise” program
- arrest of Dr Haneef, seven UK “Muslim doctors”

complaint to Australian Communications and Media Authority
“discriminated against Muslims”

intermittently handed out flyers in Martin Place, Sydney
- critical of Channel 7 *Sunrise programme*
www.sheikhharon.com – August 2007
inflammatory statements, media releases

late 2007, 60 letters, facsimiles, media releases
• PM, Federal Leader of Opposition, Federal Attorney General, AFP Commissioner

November 2007
offensive letters to families of Australian soldiers killed in Afghanistan
Monis – further sexual assaults
February 2008 - September 2010
whilst representing himself as a “spiritual healer”

Not charged until 2014

21 May 2008 wrote to federal Opposition leader
explosions in shopping centres and fires
result of “terrorist activities”

June 2008 protest at Parliament House, Canberra
Protests outside the studios of Channel 7 – June, July 2008
Martin Place, Sydney (opposite Lindt Café)
Bali bombings – 12 October 2002

202 mostly foreign tourists killed
88 Australians killed
Abu Bashir – March 2005

spiritual leader of *Jamaah Islamiyah*

guilty only of conspiracy, original sentence: 30 months imprisonment
Man Haron Monis – new Australian passport

21 November 2006 legally changed name to Man Haron Monis
claimed title of “Hujatoleslam” (authority on Islam)

27 November 2006 new Australian passport
2005 - 2006 travelled extensively

complained “harassed” by customs at airport
"targeting Muslim clerics“
radical cleric Abu Bashir
Bali bombers executed – 9 November 2008

Monis sends letters to families of the Bali bombers

“martyrs”
“actions of the Australian government made the country unsafe”
“promised” Muslims would attack Australia
“Australians would be killed …”
Analysis by ASIO – 5 December 2008

no information that Monis’ associates were of “security concern” not involved in any politically motivated violence
  • no promotion of communal violence

www.shakeheron.com website
  • did not pose any significant security threat

Channel 7 investigation
confirmation from Iranian community
  • Monis was not a real “sheik”
  • did not belong to any mosque
  • leading Muslim figures held Monis in contempt
Channel 7 investigation – *Today Tonight* programme
complained to Channel 7
complained to Australian Communications and Media Authority
  • program invaded his privacy, “caused danger” to his life

speculation:
*major grievance against Channel 7*
  • *Lindt Café chosen as site of final protest*
  • *located opposite studio of Channel 7*
**Charged with postal offences – 20 October 2009**

**2009** regular meetings of NSW Joint Counter-Terrorism Team both ASIO and JCCT conclude

- no counter-terrorism offences

**20 October 2009**

arrested
charged with 7 postal service offences
offensive letters to soldiers’ families
Bail hearing - Downing Centre – 2 November 2009

chained himself to railing holding small Australian flags “bring home” Australian troops
Bail continued – 11 November 2009

again chained himself to railing outside court
“bring home” Australian troops
“don’t kill Afghan civilians”

appealed the decision
• case against him "political and unconstitutional"

2008 Australian troop withdrawal begins
July 2009 Australia ends combat operations
Protest in Martin Place – 3 December 2009

anti-Israel demonstration
Charged with further postal services offences

11 May 2010 six further offences

July 2010 pleaded not guilty
“constitutional freedom of political communication”

6 December 2011 appeal against indictment dismissed by NSW Court of Criminal Appeal
Domestic violence

June 2010 separated

22 July 2011 Noleen Pal reported to police disputes over access to children, Monis abusive, threatening

“If I can’t see the kids more than I am now, you’re going to pay, even if I have to shoot you”

27 July 2011 charged apprehended violence order, bailed

30 May 2012 Campbelltown Local Court - “not guilty”
Monis – limited access to his children, new partner

27 October 2011
interim orders for supervised access

24 August 2012 Noleen Pal - full custody of the children

2012 partner 32-yr-old Anastasia Droudi:
Greek orthodox, hair-dresser
later converted to Islam
changed name to Amirah (“princess ”)
Rebels motorcycle gang
attempted to become a member
regularly attended Mt Druitt clubhouse

**September 2012** acquired Harley Davidson motorcycle
Rebels motorcycle gang – intimidation

13 January 2013 intimidation of Pal and her mother asked for assistance to kill his ex-partner how to acquire a gun
**Noleen Pal murdered – 21 April 2013**

returned to collect their two sons (aged 7 and 4) after access visit

stabbed multiple times
doused with fuel
set alight
Monis – staged minor accident, taken to hospital

at Nepean Hospital, Penrith
interviewed by police
appears to be shocked
called for medical assistance
Murder trial of Doudis, convicted – November 2016

trial judge:
“overwhelming evidence” that Monis organised the murder
“incredible lengths to establish an alibi”
filmed himself with his children at a public swimming pool
staged a minor accident
access to police records, correspondence
psychological assessment of Monis
did not actually interview Monis

• grandiose, arrogant
• lacking in empathy
• pre-occupied with his own self-importance
  consistent with narcissistic personality disorder
• fragile sense of self-esteem, react badly to criticism
Monis – pleads guilty to postal offences

5 August 2013 pleaded guilty
convicted on 12 counts

6 September 2013
sentenced to 300 hrs community service
two-year good behaviour bond
PM announces withdrawal of Australian troops from Afghanistan

28 October 2013
Prime Minister Tony Abbott
special ceremony
Uruzgan province, Afghanistan
Challenged Prime Minister to debate

1 November 2013 wrote to the Prime Minister Australia's policy in Afghanistan

“a significant role in jeopardising security and peace in the world ... Australia”
Monis – arrested, offences related to murder

15 November 2013
Monis and Droudis arrested
Monis - accessory before and after the fact of murder

- refused police bail
- did not apply for bail
- remanded into custody
Monis – granted bail, released from custody

12 December 2013 Penrith Local Court
Magistrate William Pierce:
• Crown’s case was “weak”
• both Monis and Amirah had “alibis”

17 December 2013 conditional bail
released from custody
“I was tortured in prison for my letter writing”
Monis – charged with indecent and sexual assault

14 April 2014 arrested, charged with sex offences dating from 2002
Monis compared accusations to allegations made against Julian Assange, Wikileaks

26 May 2014 – granted bail
31 July 2014 – bail continued
Monis – letter to Federal Attorney-General

9 October 2014 from “Sheik Haron” (Shi’a cleric)

“I would like to send a letter to Caliph Ibrahim, the leader of the Islamic State, in which making (sic) some comments and asking some questions. Please advise me whether the communication is legal or illegal.”
Islamic State – Sunni fundamentalists

destroying mosques, sacred sites
slaughtering Shi-ite Muslims
NSW Coroner Michael Barnes

“... letter in itself is not necessarily suggestive of terrorist intentions, but it does suggest a shift in Monis’ thinking and perhaps an increasing identification with radical interpretations of Islam.”
Monis – charged with further 37 sex offences

10 October 2014, further 37 sex offences
• 22 counts of aggravated sexual assault
• 14 counts of aggravated indecent assaults
  • alleged against six women
  • "spiritual clinic" 2002 – 2010

Director of Public Prosecutions did not oppose bail

NSW Coroner: “...in no instance was an application made to review or re-visit the grants of bail made in favour of Monis”
National Security Hotline

9 – 12 December 2014

18 calls, e-mails related to Monis
drawing attention to Facebook page

“oppression and terrorism of United States
.... and its allies including Australia ...”

AFP, ASIO assessment

no desire or intent to engage in terrorist
no indication of an imminent threat
did not meet threshold for prosecution under new anti-terrorism legislation
Monis – High Court appeal dismissed

12 December 2014  appeal from conviction for postal offences
High Court dismissed the appeal
“constitutional issues had already been considered”
Monis – website “conversion”

December 2014

appears to convert from Shi'ite to Sunni Islam

"I used to be a Rafidi ..." (Arabic: "heretic")
used by Sunnis as abusive term for Shi'ites

“Now I am a Muslim ...”
Lindt Café siege – Martin Place, Sydney
flag of shahada - Islamic declaration of faith
"There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is the messenger of God"
Australia is under attack by the Islamic State. There are 3 bombs in three different locations:
- Martin Place, Circular Q and George street.
- I want to contact other brothers and ask them NOT to explode the other two bombs but I can't contact because they don't carry phone with them.
- They have radio with them, I can say that through Radio ABC.

The plan is to request Tony Abbott to call them or me, and to have a debate while it is broadcast live on ABC National Radio.
- So that's why they have Radio, and the best way to contact them is by my voice message to announce that they should not explode the bombs. They listen to me anything I tell them.
- The device placed inside the radios is another way of exploding the bombs.
Monis – a radicalised Islamist terrorist?

clairvoyance, astrology, numerology, ‘black magic’ – inconsistent with Muslim faith

- difficult to reconcile Monis’ narcissistic personality traits with radical Islamist ideology, subordination to the demands of a caliph

- no evidence of any genuine religious zeal, commitment
- no witness to Monis in solemn prayer, devotion
- no deep attachment or commitment

Monis’ florid, confected protests
- would alienate genuine pacifist, anti-war activists
“persecuted” by Australian government and the courts
“injustices” against Muslims in Iraq, Afghanistan

"Man Haron Monis ... has continuously been under attack and false accusation by the Australian government and media since he started his political letter campaign from 2007 ... His children have been taken away from him by the Australian government ... he is not allowed to visit or even call them.”
no sophisticated understanding of Islamic theology

- mixed up Sunni, Shi-ite, Salafist, Sufist, other terminology

picture of **Osama Bin Laden:**

“**Shi-ites ... the enemies of Islam**”
Monis – no pledge of loyalty to *al-Baghdadi, the caliph*

**oath of loyalty** regular feature of Islamic State attacks  
• pledge to an individual, not to an organisation

**17 November 2014  Monis’ brief web-site pledge**

*I pledge my allegiance to God, his Messenger and the Caliphate of the Muslims. Peace be upon the Commander of the faithful and the Caliph of the Muslims, the Iman/preacher of our time.*

never referred to Caliph al-Baghdadi by name

**no terrorist message**  
• did not broadcast his intent before the siege  
• no “political, religious or ideological message”  
• never pressed any demands
Monis – no on-line, social media “foot-print”

- never downloaded videos, speeches from radical Salafist clerics or Islamic State
- posted all his messages, correspondence on his web page
- no evidence of on-line or social media “foot-print”
- no use of encrypted apps
- only 12 followers on Twitter

no “martyrdom video”
- no propaganda message for Islamic State
Monis – pretences

• repeated, confected information linked to high profile events
• ambiguous messages calculated to attract the attention of the media

• sham protests, offensive letters
  • “liberal cleric refugee” from Iran
  • “anti-war” protestor
  • “persecuted” by the government
Monis – any connection with *Hizb-ut Tahrir* “Party of Liberation”
Monis – no connection with *Hizb-ut Tahrir*

19 September 2014
demonstration organised by *Hizb-ut Tahrir*
Monis – his greatest fears

• extradited back to Iran to stand trial for fraud offences
• charged with further sex offences from “Spiritual Healing” business

at the time of the Lindt café siege
• charged with 43 sexual offences
• alleged against six victims
• likely convicted of multiple offences, long prison sentence

attention-seeking
create the persona of victimized anti-government activist, protestor
Why take a list of Muslim prisoners to the siege?

note found in Monis’ pocket
• contact details of lawyers
• list of in-mate “master index numbers” of Muslim prisoners
  Long Bay Correctional Centre

Monis’ objective:
conduct a dramatic siege
enhance his standing after he was imprisoned
cast himself as a “lone wolf” jihadist
admired, respected, at least by Muslim inmates
Lindt café siege – not a well-planned attack

crudely written demand note
backpack bought previous day
speaker box with wires
black flag, Arabic writing – *shahada* (not synonymous with jihadists)

**Monis did not have Islamic State flag**

• referred to “Islamic State” only in first sentence
• no explicit connection with any terrorist objective
• never used any vernacular of Islamist jihadists
Why the Lindt café?

Lindt café on Martin Place - no political or religious significance directly opposite Channel 7 studio - great personal significance

• Monis vilified as “fake sheik” in 2009
• many protests against channel 7

siege of over 16 hrs

no terrorist agenda

armed with 20 cartridges

deliberately killed one hostage
Dabiq, Islamic State on-line propaganda

29 December 2014 - al-Qaeda magazine *Inspire* referred to Monis

January 2015 - Islamic State *Dabiq* 6th edition

English-language on-line propaganda magazine

lauded Monis for “joining the mujāhidīn”

“war against the crusader coalition”

“brought terror to the entire nation”
NSW Coroner’s Findings
“A Terrorist Incident” – an alternative hypothesis

“Whether Monis was motivated to act by public calls from the leaders of Islamic State for followers to undertake atrocities is impossible to know. His pledge of allegiance to the [Islamic State] “Caliph” four weeks before the siege suggests this might have been the case.

However, equally, he may have been on a personal crusade: frustrated by being dismissed when he adopted relatively benign means of protesting. He may have decided to use [Islamic State] to make himself seem more dangerous; did he cloak himself in the [Islamic State] rhetoric so he would not be mocked or ignored but feared?

Unlike other [Islamic State] terrorists, Monis did not immediately kill those he had taken hostage, but that is equally consistent with his belief that his best chance of achieving his political ends was by prolonging the siege.

Even with the benefit of expert evidence, it remains unclear whether Monis was motivated by [Islamic State] to prosecute its bloodthirsty agenda or whether he used that organisation’s fearsome reputation to bolster his impact.”
Lindt café siege – the role of the consultant psychiatrist

no written guidelines, protocols or procedures

_Negotiation Unit – Management Operational Guidelines (2011)_

structure of the negotiation team, no mention of a psychiatrist

**Basic Guidelines of Police Negotiators**

police could obtain advice/assistance from a psychiatrist:

- compiling a profile of a subject/s
- predicting the most likely pattern of behaviour
- identifying, analysing and interpreting hidden messages
- supporting negotiators by being completely objective
- monitoring the functioning of the negotiating team
- assisting in the reduction of stress among police officers
The consultant psychiatrist

at 1.15 pm, arrives in the Police Forward Command Post
NSW Leagues Club
Consultant psychiatrist – credentials, experience

• NSW Police Force
• Joint Australian Federal Police-NSW Police Force Counter-terrorist Unit
• since 1991, Negotiation Unit - many police negotiations

1991 – 2009, bi-annual National Training of Police Negotiators courses in counter-terrorist negotiations

developing police policies, procedures for management of critical incidents
consultant to global risk and strategic consulting firm
  • political, security and integrity risk, crisis management  support
  • negotiating release of hostages around the world

most qualified, expert forensic mental health clinician in Australia
Monis – identified as the Lindt café siege gunman

criminal history, outstanding charges
Monis’ website, Facebook, Twitter

2013 report of NSW Police clinical psychologist
  • Monis’ affidavits and correspondence
  • assessment: *narcissistic personality disorder*

NSW Chief Psychiatrist
  • reviewed Justice Health and NSW Health records
  • assessment: ‘*narcissistic criminal*’

debrief escaped hostages, conversations captured by surveillance device

11.30 pm, search of Monis’ flat in Wiley Park, Sydney
  • no bomb-making materials, no extremist literature, no martyrdom message
NSW Coroner – criticism of the consultant psychiatrist

psychiatrist gave advice on matters outside his area of expertise
• “grandstanding ... carrying out an individual or personal attack”
• Monis’ behaviour “not consistent” with the methodology of Islamic State

psychiatrist’s limited experience of sieges
• related “entirely to domestic sieges, not terrorist sieges”
• his experience in terrorism-related issues “generalist and fairly limited”
• his knowledge of Islamic State “superficial”

psychiatrist unaware that in September 2014, Islamic State propagandist al-Adnani had called for lone-actor-type terrorist attacks

no one in Australia, few people internationally, with any experience in advising law enforcement/security agencies on “terrorist hostage-sieges”
U.K. “experts”

only one U.K. expert involved in hostage negotiations
Chief Superintendent Kerrin Smith, Durham

Iranian Embassy five day siege – London 1980
Covert listening devices – inside the Lindt cafe

Australian Federal Police provided covert surveillance devices

at 9.05 pm, Monis:

“That news shows that police ... have decided not to do anything wrong and to finish everything peacefully ...”

at 11:13 pm, Monis:

“... hopefully by morning, everyone home ... After Tony Abbott calls, everyone happy, go home ...”
“Contain and negotiate”

NSW Coroner critical of the negotiators and the psychiatrist for failing to pursue opportunities to attempt to engage with Monis at 1:50 am, psychiatrist: café was “calm and settling down for the night”

- probably better for Monis to be allowed to rest
- negotiations could resume in the morning

NSW Coroner held:
the psychiatrist was influenced by his experience, limited to domestic sieges
- when the passage of time and the effects of fatigue
- more likely to weaken a hostage-taker’s resolve

assumption: Monis had a bomb in his backpack – credible threat
“Stalling for Time”
Gary Noesner
FBI chief hostage negotiator
negotiator trainer
“time and patience”
Monis – no terrorist plan or objective

immediate aims - draw attention to himself rather than any cause

hand-written note, ordered Tori Johnson to read
• referred to “Islamic State” only in the first sentence
• only to announce an “attack” on Australia

no explicit reference to any Islamist aim, objectives
no reference to “unbelievers”
no jihadist dogma

demand to “debate” the Prime Minister live on air
Islamic State-inspired attack – Bastille Day 2016
19-tonne truck, driven through celebrations on the Promenade des Anglais, Nice
86 killed
Islamic State – no negotiation position

*Rumiyah* 9th edition – “Just terrorist targets”

“The objective of hostage-taking in the lands of disbeliever ... is not to hold large numbers of the kuffar [unbelievers] hostage in order to negotiate one’s demands.

Rather, the objective is to create as much carnage and terror as one possibly can until Allah decrees his appointed time and the enemies of Allah storm his location or succeed in killing him.

This is because the hostile kafir [unbeliever] only understands one language and that is the language of force, the language of killing, stabbing and slitting throats, chopping off heads, flattening them under trucks, and burning them alive ...”
Islamic State-inspired attack – Bataclan theatre Paris, November 2015
brief siege, indiscriminate shootings, 137 killed
Monis - malignant narcissist – as advised by the consultant psychiatrist
arrogant, grandiose and callous
escape of five hostages, may react to the humiliation of a ‘narcissistic injury’
-> intense fury (‘narcissistic rage’)

unemployed, middle-aged divorcee
domestic violence
lost custody of children
multiple historical sex offences
murder of his ex-wife
envision long prison sentence
6 hostages escape -> experienced a profound humiliation, rage
Monis – what terrorist demands?

Evidence of psychiatrist:

Monis’ original demands “... fatuous and implausible”

Monis “leader” of a terrorist cell
other operatives poised “ready to detonate bombs around Sydney”
but would desist once Monis had a “debate” with the Prime Minister
broadcast on national radio

Early on the second day, Monis fatigued, likely contemplating surrender
-> mass escape intervened

“complete reversal of psychological process at its most susceptible movement”
**Hindsight bias**

**outcome bias**

the tendency for persons equipped with knowledge of an outcome to exaggerate their ability to predict the inevitability of the outcome

simplify, trivialize, retrospectively criticize decision-making without appreciating contemporaneous difficulties

find meaning in a critical incident particularly when loss of life
Dr Jonathan Phillips – “opinion” evidence

general adult psychiatrist
• contribution to psychiatry in Australia
• RANZCP President 1999 - 2001

no publications in forensic psychiatry

“no doubt” Monis was a “lone wolf terrorist”

would have killed more hostages had police not broken the siege

risks to the hostages “increased with every hour that passed”

because he was a psychopath, “unlikely to be receptive to negotiation”

“the siege was never going to end peacefully”
NSW Premier, Police Commissioner – joint media conference

at 8.15 pm
“contact” has been made with the gunman
NSW police negotiators “best in the world”
Lindt café siege – police emergency action
RANZCP did not support our senior psychiatrist colleague also missed an opportunity to endorse the role of psychiatrists assisting police, security agencies

NSW Coroner’s disparagement of the senior psychiatrist unintended consequence psychiatrists may be reluctant to assist police, security agencies in hostage-sieges or other critical incidents
Questions, comments, debate

“Man Haron Monis and the Sydney Lindt Cafe Siege – Not a Terrorist Attack” *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law* 2018

“The Sydney Lindt café siege: The role of the consultant psychiatrist” *Australian and New Zealand Journal Psychiatry* 2019