

# **Lone actor terrorism in the media: deranged person or terrorist?**

## **Media portrayal of Breivik's attacks**

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# 1. Introduction

The topic of this research is framing in the media of violence executed by a single person who has no affiliations with terrorist groups or networks (Becker, 2014, p.964). This topic, best known by the name of ‘lone wolf terrorism’ or ‘lone actor terrorism’ only recently became a subject for academic research (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 5). For the reason that the internet and social media enable communication and information gathering in ways and scope unseen before (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 2) it has been argued by some that the prominence of lone actor terrorism increased significantly after 9/11 (Spaaij & Hamm, 2015, p. 171).

An exemplary case of lone actor terrorism which is not generally perceived as such is the Jokela High School shooting. On 7 November 2007 the 18-year old student Pekka-Eric Auvinen started shooting at the Jokela High School in Tuusula in Southern Finland. After having killed 8 people, six students, the school nurse and the principal, he shot himself in the head (Ministry of Justice, 2009, p. 13). In March 2007 the culprit wrote in his diary that he wanted to make an impact with a violent act and that he would probably die in the act. He believed other people would follow his lead and do the same thing. He was inspired by several other violent incidents both abroad and in Finland, such as the Columbine High School Massacre and the Virginia Tech Massacre and he communicated about the former in webforums. Days before the shooting he uploaded a manifesto (Ministry of Justice, 2009, p. 17). He also wrote several other documents, such as a farewell message in which he stated that he hoped things would change as a result of his act, making the world a better place. On the day of the shooting, he uploaded a video to Youtube and posted it on the internet saying that he would be making history that day (Ministry of Justice, 2009, p. 18). In the media package he wrote he declared that he would not want the act to be remembered as “only a “school shooting”” (Oksanen et al., 2013, p. 10). Auvinen also stresses his ideological motives and that he was disappointed with traditional politics (Oksanen et al., 2013 p. 10). However, in the media it is only very rarely described as a terrorist act.

This attack is one that would seemingly correspond with the type of violent act that definitions of terrorism tend to describe, however, it has never been described as such, just like many other school shootings. This research aims to deconstruct the portrayal of a home-grown, lone actor and through this the social concept of terrorism. In recent times, several instances of lone actor violence have been branded terrorism, whereas others have not. This is a problem in and of itself, since terrorism tends to imply an essential threat to national security, which requires a stronger political reaction than a random violent act by a mentally ill person, which is more erratic in nature and cannot be

counteracted by for example more inclusive policies. Spaaij argues that the term terrorism is not a given, but a social construct. It therefore only provides an expression of an interpretation, which often also reflects the interests of the party which does the defining (Spaaij, 2011, p. 15). By calling something a terrorist act, it is effectively securitized and special measures are warranted. It is therefore necessary to further analyze these representations.

A lot of research is being done on lone actors due to the (perceived) increased societal relevance of the subject at the moment. Research on the subject of lone actors has mostly been focusing on motivations for lone actor violence and the policy side of the question. The first category of research has increased our knowledge of the phenomenon. The second category focuses on how to tackle these problems from a policy perspective (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 6). The step in between these two: how to react to lone actor terrorism, which defines the policy reaction to the event, has not been researched in much depth. The little research that has been done seems to suggest the framing of lone actor violence is rather inconsistent (Capellan, 2015). It would therefore be relevant to see how lone actors are being framed and what the reasons behind these different ways of framing might be.

As mentioned before, some argue the issue of lone actor violence is a recent development. Amongst others new forms of communication through internet and in general globalization are believed to have contributed to the rise of this 'new' type of violence (Spaaij & Hamm, 2015, p. 171). However, this turns out not to be the case. In fact, lone actor terrorism is older than the Bible itself (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 1). What has changed is the view within security studies on terrorism. Until quite recently, it was considered to be a group activity driven by a certain political or religious agenda (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 5). Kaplan et al. therefore attribute the alleged rise in lone actor violence to changing interpretations and definitions of the phenomenon rather than an actual surge in occurrence (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 6). They point out that interpretations are strongly influenced by contemporary politics and debates and therefore stating that lone actor terrorism is experiencing an upsurge is not a neutral statement. The problem is therefore: how exactly are these instances of violence being framed? And what might account for the differences between cases?

The objective of the research is to find out which factors contribute to the framing of lone actor violence. The media use certain terms to describe an act of violence. These terms have an impact on different aspects of life, such as subjective security and how certain actors and acts are generally perceived. In this way it can assist someone in furthering their interests (Malkki, 2011, p. 204 - 206). For example, the Dutch government for a long time tried to avoid the term 'terrorism' and

preferred to use 'politically motivated activism', because the term 'terrorism' was found too provocative and to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. However, in the 1970s 16 people died in violent attacks with political or nationalist motivations (Malkki, 2011, p. 206). A similar trend can be perceived in Finland, although since the 2000s the term 'terrorism' has been used increasingly, reflecting the trend in international politics. It is, however, mostly seen as a threat from outside society rather than from the inside. The dominant discourse therefore in Finland is still that terrorism does not happen there (Malkki, 2011, p. 206 - 207). One of the incidents discussed in the article by Malkki shows that because the actor was not part of an organization, it was not seen as terrorism: "...also important is that there is likely no question of terrorism, but a person's desperate act" (Malkki, 2011, p. 209). Also in official statements it was portrayed as an accident and a criminal act (Malkki, 2011, p. 209 - 210).

In this research the representation in the Finnish, Dutch, British and American media of the violence exhibited by Anders Behring Breivik in Norway on 22 July 2011 around the time of pivotal developments in the process from the attacks until the verdict was made public is studied. It focusses on the nature of the attacks by Breivik in Oslo and on the island Utøya and the underlying assumptions in how Breivik himself and his acts are described: as terrorism or the acts of a deranged person. This case is of large relevance to the field, because the attacks had a large societal impact and because it was executed by a lone actor with a cultural background in the country in which he executed the attacks. The data has been analyzed from a social constructivist perspective, relying on Doty's understanding of discourses and three mechanisms for expressing belief systems.

I expect that non-Muslim lone actors are less likely to be branded terrorists, but rather as killers, shooters, bombers or other such (less value-laden) terms. Due to the large-scale nature of the attack and the methods used by Breivik I expect his deeds to have started a re-interpretation of the word 'terrorism'. I therefore expect the term 'terrorism' to get a broader meaning in discourse. I also expect the far right to react to these deeds, as Breivik based himself on major far right writers, thereby implying them in the attacks by association. In short: I expect people to connect the term 'terrorism', both consciously and unconsciously to organized, jihadist terrorism. This unconscious categorization has an impact on the way people look at Muslims and terrorism and thereby also indirectly for policy questions. If the threat is perceived to come from outside of society, other measures are needed than when they come from within society. This research also fills a gap in the literature, since most research is done on other aspects of terrorism and on other types of cases. Discourse analysis of home-grown, lone actor terrorism is still rather rare, but can provide answers to

questions in terms of the assumptions underlying terrorism-related terms.

The main research question is:

How are the attacks by Anders Behring Breivik framed in Dutch, Finnish, British and international media?

This is divided into three sub-questions, looking further into three aspects of the framing:

1. How do the media evaluate Breivik's acting alone?
2. Is Breivik seen as a terrorist or framed in other terms?
3. How are Breivik's attacks contextualized?

The main subject is the portrayal of Breivik's attacks in the light of terrorism. However, the portrayal of Breivik's attacks as either terrorism or not terrorism is so interwoven with the questions of his loneliness and the contextualization of the attacks in the broader (political) context that I felt it impossible to separate these questions from each other. Whether or not someone is seen as a terrorist seems to depend on both the ideology and whether he acted alone or as part of a group. Interweaved through these discourses is the insanity question by which the attacks are depoliticized.



## 2. Theoretical framework

In this chapter I will introduce the main theories and concepts on which the analysis is based. The theory used in this research is social constructivism. Central to this theory is the concept of ‘discourse’, which will be discussed first. Then the reader is introduced to the larger branch of critical theory, in which subchapter I argue that social constructivism is a critical theory, although not everyone considers it as such. From there we will zoom in to social constructivism and how discourses function according to the theory. In the rest of the chapter the main frames surrounding the relevant constructs of terrorism and lone actor terrorism will be discussed.

The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism mentions lone wolves for the first time in 2011. Until that time terrorism was considered a group activity in its essence (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 5). Most research on the subject has been conducted in the past ten years, focusing mostly on descriptive aspects, such as the background of lone actors, their preferred *modi operandi* and targets, the history of lone actor terrorism and the development of the idea of leaderless resistance (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 6). The term ‘leaderless resistance’ is only adopted into academia quite recently. The term was mainly in use by the far right as a buzz term until Kaplan in 1997 published an article in which he referred to leaderless resistance. At that point it was still a rather descriptive term and introduced as part of the discourse of the far right. Only later it gradually turned into an organizational model, but with different understandings of the actuality of leaderlessness (Joosse, 2015, p. 18).

However, we are still lacking research on the construct of terrorism such as into why lone actor terrorism is perceived as a recent and growing problem or how the perception of terrorism in general has developed over time. This is highly influenced by the political debate due to the politicized and securitized nature of the debate around terrorism (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 6). This has an impact on the political debate as well: we are much more likely to see an act of violence by a lone actor as an act of terrorism in recent times than decades ago, when terrorism was perceived as primarily a group activity. When reviewing old literature on terrorism one will not find many instances of lone actor violence, simply for the reason that it was not considered terrorism at that time. Many examples can be found, however. The question now becomes rather: how does one distinguish between lone actor terrorism and other types of lone actor violence? For example school shootings tend to be discussed in different terms than lone actor terrorism, although they could be considered to be an instance of lone actor terrorism (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 7). This research takes a step towards filling this gap in research by researching the discourse surrounding Breivik’s violent attacks in Oslo and on Utøya.

## 2.1 Research of discourse

A discourse is “a system of statements in which each individual statement makes sense, produces interpretive possibilities by making it virtually impossible to think outside of it” (Doty, 1993, p. 302). It is a collection of statements which reflect what the world is like, according to that interpretation. It links different concepts, categories, metaphors, models and analogies together into a discursive space. Discursive meanings provide meaning the world and in this way construct a particular ‘reality’ (Doty, 1993, p. 303). Therefore it is essential to focus on discourses when researching how a certain decision came into being. It also necessarily extends beyond those persons making the actual decision, since discourses are social constructions, created in the social world. This necessarily involves more than one actor and people from different backgrounds in different roles can contribute to the creation of discourse and are influenced by it.

Research on the effect of words, formulations and naming have mostly been conducted through the method of critical discourse analysis and this is also the method that will be used in this research. First, social constructivism is explained and placed in its context of critical theory. Unfortunately little to no critical discourse analysis has been done on lone actor terrorism yet, which is the gap this research tries to fill. However, the same cannot be said for the larger phenomenon of terrorism. We will therefore also look into the framing of terrorism in general in order to determine the general trends at play in the discourse.

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### 2.1.1 Critical theory

Critical theory has its origins in the ideas from the Enlightenment on identifying possibilities of social change and classical Greek thought on autonomy and democracy (Devetak, 2005a, p. 137 - 138). However, during the twentieth century it became more associated with the ideas of the so-called Frankfurt School. This school of thought is characterized by the method of immanent critique. It tries to understand modern society by understanding how it was created, both historically and socially. Furthermore, it tries to “transcend contemporary society and its built-in pathologies and forms of domination” (Devetak, 2005a, p. 138) and in this way forms an emancipatory family of theories. Critical theory research actively looks for opportunities to change social reality (Devetak, 2005a, p. 138). Critical theory is necessarily self-reflective, since knowledge is always situated and therefore theory is never separated from society. Theory constitutes society and conversely, society constitutes theory. It draws attention to the relationship between knowledge and society, thereby focusing on the political nature of knowledge (Devetak, 2005a, p. 139). The motto of the critical

theorist is that of Robert Cox: “Theory is always for someone and for some purpose” (Devetak, 2005a, p. 141). This critical view on the creation of knowledge stands in contrast to the more traditional, positivist theories in which the researcher is seen as being outside of its subject of study and able to objectively observe and theorizes from that position (Devetak, 2005a, p. 139). Postitivists take the world as it is, including social orders and lets its theories loose on it. Effectively it therefore strengthens the social structures in the world, reinforcing inequalities of power and wealth (Devetak, 2005a, p. 142). Critical theory researchers try to lay those inequalities bare and overthrow them.

Critical theory is the result of a move away from the traditional, positivist, problem-solving theories (Stump & Dixit, 2011, p. 199). It aims to asks the questions that conventional theory takes for granted (Stump & Dixit, 2011, p. 200). A subfield of Critical Theory is Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS), which in itself is a subcategory of Critical IR Theory and takes a critical approach to how terrorism is being studied. The main critique from researchers in CTS: “conventional terrorism scholarship takes for granted the object of study (terrorism), is unreflective about the effects of portraying particular groups of people as ‘terrorist’, ignores the role of the state as producer of violence, and is uncommitted to social emancipation” (Stump & Dixit, 2011, p. 200). CTS aims to critique social structures which produce knowledge and to be reflexive while exercising a commitment to ‘methodological and disciplinary pluralism’ (Stump & Dixit, 2011, p. 200).

Within critical theory many different theories are used which stem from either of two ontological perspectives: dualism and monism (Stump & Dixit, 2011, p. 204). The concepts of dualism and monism have been created by Patrick Thaddeus Jackson and distinguish between two ontological presuppositions. Most researchers within traditional, problem-solving approaches as well as critical realists have a dualist presupposition. This means that they presume that their ideas and the world are separated. The epistemological result of this is that there is such a thing as ‘truth’, which means the correspondence of matter in the material world to the mental pictures of these matters. Hypothesis testing is one of those research practices in which a researcher tests to see if their mental picture corresponds with the truth or whether the mental picture must be adjusted to the empirical world. It sees subject and object as separate and claims that objective observation is possible (Stump & Dixit, 2011, p. 202).

The second supposition is monism, which is an ontology in which reality and knowledge of reality are seen as one and the same. It is impossible to disentangle reality from the practices in which knowledge is created. Logically, all knowledge is ideal-typical in this ontology. Language is essen-

tial in this ontology, since it is the only method in which to express knowledge (Stump & Dixit, 2011, p. 202). The two ontologies are mutually exclusive, since in the dualist ontology a researcher aims to reflect the character of reality, whereas in the monist ontology researchers study how people communicate and hereby constitute reality. They do not look at reality how they find it, but how it came to be as it is now. This is the ontology of critical theory. The epistemological consequence is that observations and analyses cannot be separated from the analyst or researcher.

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### 2.1.2 Social constructivism

Social constructivists argue that a particular representation of issues and events contributes to social reality and through this, public opinion and policy. Social interactions have a large power in shaping perceptions through the language they use. The impact language exerts on the interpretation of the information provided through media is called 'framing'. Framing theory will be explained extensively in the next subchapter. The media is one of the collections of actors which have a large influence on discourses through framing. First, I will discuss the theory of social constructivism and its premises.

The theory of social constructivism, which I will use in this research, uses a monist ontology. Whether or not it is a critical theory is being widely discussed. Social constructivism is, according to some, much less activist than critical theory and therefore does not belong to this family of theories. Neuman places constructivism in interpretive social sciences, whereas critical social sciences comprise a separate family which appears to be limited to mostly Marxist-type theories taking activism beyond just the research itself, turning social action in order to make people aware of the inequalities expressed in their research into a part of the research process (Neuman, 2014, p. 103 - 117).

Alexander Wendt, however, who is regarded as a pure constructivist, argues that constructivism is actually a critical theory due to the aim of constructivists to explain that social structures are the result of practice. Ideas, in this perspective, always matter, as opposed to the role of ideas in other theories. He also stresses constructivists' normative interest in effecting change, as opposed to Neuman, who claims this is what distinguishes interpretive and critical social sciences (Wendt, 1997, p. 74).

The core of constructivism and critical theory lies within ontological and epistemological questions. Critical theory is often described as a family of theories which claim that there is no world with an objective existence out there to be observed. Wendt counters this by saying this conception of criti-

cal theory confuses ontology and epistemology (Wendt, 1997, p. 74). Critical theorists do believe there is a world with an objective existence which can be known. However, modern and postmodern theorists are being confused in this concept of social constructivism. Postmodern theorists claim there is not one truth which can be known and that therefore any evaluation of the world around us is equally correct. They do, however, attend to evidence and inference in their empirical research. Constructivists are in this sense more modernist in believing that falsification of theories through empirical observation and analysis of these observations is the right way to do scientific research (Wendt, 1997, p. 75). What both Wendt, Price and Reus-Smit stress, and what is related to the previous matter, is that critical theorists believe that object and subject cannot be separated in analysis, which proves constructivists' monist ontology. From this it becomes clear that they share the same ontological assumptions with critical theorists (Wendt, 1997, p. 75). As Wendt formulates it: "All observation is theory-*laden* in the sense that what we see is mediated by our existing theories, and to that extent knowledge is inherently problematic. But this does not mean that observation, let alone reality, is theory-*determined*" (Wendt, 1997, p. 75, original emphasis).

Also Price and Reus-Smit see critical theory as comprising several different theories, both modern and postmodern. They add to this list of characteristics of critical theory two more: a methodological and normative common characteristic. All critical theories reject the idea of a dominant methodology. They highlight the values of interpretive methodologies, but see the merits of a plurality of methods. The normative characteristic comprises of a condemnation of value neutral theorizing, denying that such an exercise is even possible (Price & Reus-Smit, 1998, p. 261). What distinguishes modern and postmodern theories is the 'critical interpretivism' of modern theories and the 'radical interpretivism' of postmodern theories. The latter rejects all expressions of validity of one analytical or ethical knowledge claim over the other, claiming that all truths are equally valid. Modernists don't go quite as far, although they recognize the contingent nature of knowledge and the relationship between power and morality. They do however distinguish between plausible and implausible interpretations of social life (Price & Reus-Smit, 1998, p. 262).

I argue, similarly to Wendt, that social constructivism still follows the ontological tradition of critical theory due to the critical approach in trying to overthrow existing structures of power and social norms and the shared ontological and epistemological assumptions. Critical theories should be seen as opposed to and critical of the traditional theories. Postmodernists, on the other hand, do not believe in a critical stance towards traditional theories, because it is, in their view, another form of the totalizing project. Discourse can therefore never be freed through emancipation, power relations

will always play a role (Price & Reus-Smit, 1998, p. 262). From this perspective social constructivism can hardly be considered a non-critical theory.

The field of social constructivist research focuses on the role of discourse and sees terms such as ‘terrorism’ not as a fact of life, but as a term people use to express their interpretation of facts of life in the process of attributing meaning to events. The acts and people executing terrorist attacks are real, but they become terrorist(s) through the interpretation which is expressed in discourse (Spencer, 2012, p. 394). This is not without risk: by repeating a certain discourse, this is reinforced and normalized continuously. Power plays a large role in the creation of discourses. It is “a kind of power that is productive of meanings, subject identities, their interrelationships, and a range of imaginable conduct” (Doty, 1993, p. 299).

The social structure of a system constitutes actors with certain identities and interests and provides their military capabilities with meaning. These identities and ways of thinking which are embedded in the structure make certain policy options possible. Wendt emphasizes that constructivists argue that “agency and interaction produce and reproduce structures of shared knowledge over time” (Wendt, 1997, p. 76). Whatever a state decides to do to another state defines the identity of the state and contributes to the discourse on the other state. If state A chooses to militarize the border with state B, the identity of state A changes, but also the identity of state B in opposition to state A changes. A structure will be created in which both states militarize because the structure defines them as hostile (Wendt, 1997, p. 77). In a related manner, whether state A obtaining certain material capabilities constitutes a threat to state B or not depends on the structures in place. In Wendt’s words: “*History matters*” (Wendt, 1997, p. 77). If that country is a like-minded country this may not be as big a threat, or it might even be a positive thing, whereas in the case of a hostile country this may be an immense (potential) threat to national security (Wendt, 1997, p. 73).

To sum it up: how something (this can be anything: acts, people, countries, issues, etc.) is portrayed and the actions people take on it have an effect on identities and structures. In this way future discourses and actions are shaped by limiting the ways in which the audience is able to think and act about the acts, people, countries or issues. Conversely: one could ‘steer’ policy-making on a subject and public opinion into a certain direction by portraying that subject in a certain way. The person producing the text (whether on paper or spoken) exercises their power over the audience in this way.

Social constructivism is inherently different from traditional, problem-solving theories. Problem-

solving research aims to answer why-questions, whereas social constructivism research aims to answer how- and how-possible questions. Doty argues that when moving from why-questions to how- and how-possible questions the aspect of discourse is included into the equation, asking much more critical questions than in the previous type of research questions (Doty, 1993, p. 299). The problem with why-questions is that it disregards the underlying question of whether or not it is possible for an event to happen (Doty, 1993, p. 298). This means that it presupposes a certain state of being and a background of social/discursive practices which allow for a certain event to take place or a certain decision to be taken at a certain moment. However, without this background of discursive practices certain acts would not even be considered as realistic and also this background needs to be questioned and studied (Doty, 1993, p. 298). How-questions delve deeper into the practices which enable actors to act as they do, going into power relations. This approach is therefore much more critical than when pursuing to answer why-questions, which includes many more assumptions already in its question.

The problematization of the subjective environment of individuals is a result of the cognitive revolution. The cognitive revolution focuses on individuals as constitutive of meaning, making the subjective environment of individuals problematic. This attracted our attention to the world as it is perceived by different actors and how this leads to different policy decisions (Doty, 1993, p. 300).

In this research, I will study the statements made which reflect the perceptions, motivations and belief systems. I will focus on their expression through language. The expression of discourses is both productive and reflective. While it reflects already existing perceptions, motivations and belief systems, it also actively produces, shapes and strengthens them. This presupposes a dual role on the part of language, namely to act as signifiers, names for ideas which already exist in our heads and through this relationship also to impact its reader which understands the social implications of the words used (Doty, 1993, p. 301). While Doty sees these approaches as opposing, I argue that a combination of the two is possible. This combination stresses that while words have certain, intersubjective meanings and refer to real-life affairs, they still have to go through the filter of people's perceptions. In this filter, words can get a different 'color' or 'feeling', meaning that the stress may be on different aspects of the phenomenon or imbue different readers with different feelings and associations based on their personal history, knowledge of the world around them and emotions. This approach requires for its use the existence of a human being who exists in the real, social world and knows to link the word 'chair' to the idea of a chair. In essence the concepts and name exist on their own, they can be found in the dictionary. In order for it to be understood and given



actual meaning applicable in real-life, social beings are needed.

Discourses therefore need both language and social beings in order to be constituted and develop. Without these two things they cannot exist. Language derives its purpose from social beings using the language, giving letters, words and combinations of words meaning in both a substantive and more figurative way by linking words to both real-life objects and placing it in their referential framework of experiences, providing it with certain emotions, giving it a quality.

So how do discourses function, in what ways do they express existing perceptions, motivations and belief systems? In Doty's view this happens through three mechanisms: presupposition, predication and subject positioning. Presupposition is the mechanism by which certain information is presupposed when making statements. This information is known by the party making the statement and supposed to be known by the people/person to which the statement is directed (Doty, 1993, p.306). One concrete example of this is from an op-ed by William Dalrymple in *The Guardian* on 20 February 2017. The title 'In Pakistan, tolerant Islamic voices are being silenced' (Dalrymple, W., 2017) removes agency from the 'tolerant Islamic voices', turning them into passive objects which undergo the treatment more dominant parties subject them to. Secondly, it presupposes that the European who describes it all has the authority and the knowledge to judge the event in terms of righteousness, as if there were some form of universal human rights which everyone adheres to and should adhere to. It is exemplary for the arrogance of which Westerners are often accused by non-Westerners.

Predication is the second mechanism by which discourses are created. It consists of attributing quality to words by describing them with adjectives, adverbs and predicates. These linguistic additives tell us something of the opinion someone holds of the subject by stressing certain qualities over others, for example (Doty, 1993, p.306). The title used as an example in the previous paragraph quite strongly reflects the author's opinion of the event and its victims by describing victims metaphorically as 'tolerant Islamic voices'.

The title used in the two previous paragraphs also serves as an example of the last process, namely subject positioning. Through this mechanism the relationship between subjects and objects is expressed, which forms a large part of a particular kind of subject. In the previous title this is exemplified by the part 'are being silenced'. This suggests a passive undergoing of their fate and a second actor which dominates the 'tolerant Islamic voices'. This formulation also tells us something about the quality of the 'other', besides it dominating 'tolerant Islamic voices'. It implies that the domi-



nating party is intolerant. There are three types of subject positioning to be distinguished: opposition, identity, similarity and complementarity (Doty, 1993, p.306). These three mechanisms are utilised, both consciously and unconsciously, in combination and separately and with different degrees of subtlety.

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### 2.1.3 Framing theory

While framing theory is not of primary relevance to this research, a general overview of the ways in which framing works is essential to understanding the influence discourses have. Discourses are expressed in language and framing is an important way in which the dominant discourse is expressed. Framing theory assumes that an issue can be viewed from different perspectives and can therefore also be constructed in communications as having implications for multiple values or considerations. In this way it can appeal to those aspects which the person(s) the communication is aimed at find important. It “refers to the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue” (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 104).

The media can have both a passive and an active role in shaping discourse and therefore beliefs. In its passive role the media reflect views and beliefs dominant in society. They become concrete in interpretations, reactions, proposed policies and decision-making (de Buitrago, 2013, p. 3). Journalists refer to the historical framework in order for people to place it in the context of earlier events, which are stored and organized in the memory of the readers. In this way new knowledge is integrated into the ‘old’ knowledge and remembered, which happens both at the collective and individual level. The collective frameworks of memory and individual memories interact (Le, 2006, p. 10). Wertsch argues that members of a group “share a representation of the past because they share textual resources. The use of these texts may result in homogeneous, complementary, or contested collective memory, but in all cases, it is the key to understanding how distribution is possible” (2002, p. 26). In its active role the media has the intention to inform and to sell. Sensational stories sell better, as well as stories which resonate the dominant ideology (de Buitrago, 2013, p. 3). Framing works well, because humans process information by using shortcuts and filters. News media frame actively when writers and editors interpret the world and describe their interpretation of the matter at hand (de Buitrago, 2013, p. 4). Falkheimer and Olson describe frames as struggles for predominance of your interpretation of a situation by involved actors. By enveloping a message in the dominant frame on this topic, one makes it easier to get their message across to the public. There is therefore a close and paradoxical interaction between frames and news media: the news media ex-

press frames, hereby shaping the values which their readers hold. On the other hand, frames cannot differ too much from the dominant values, because it will not easily be accepted by the readers (2015, p. 73). Research focusing on crisis communication also focuses on this congruence of the leader's frame's congruence with the dominant discourse. Nord and Olsson (2013) argue that crisis communication is successful when the frames leaders use are coherent, mutually reinforcing and that match the other media coverage of the event. Entman argues that framing can serve four functions: 1) defining the conditions as problematic; 2) identifying causes to the problem; 3) evaluating/conveying moral judgment of those involved; 4) endorsing solutions and remedies to the problematic situation (2004).

Chong and Druckman distinguish between two types of frames: "frame in thought" and "frame in communication". The former is the collection of values which dominates all considerations a person can make when deciding one's position on an issue. This can be one frame, but also several different frames, which makes opinion forming that much more complicated. The latter type of frame, frame in communication, is the frame which is used to highlight certain aspects over others. When highlighting those aspects one knows the audience values, the support rate for the policy is likely to be higher. In effect, it organizes every day life, gives meaning to life's events and promotes certain interpretations and aspects of political issues (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 105-106).

The success of framing depends on a few premises. Firstly, a consideration must be available to be retrieved from memory. It needs therefore to have been uttered and understood. Secondly, the consideration in question must be accessible, meaning that the utterance must trigger the mechanism which retrieves information from long-term memory. Accessibility can be increased by frequent exposure to the frame in question. Thirdly, the audience must perceive a frame as being applicable. The applicability of a frame is influenced by the perceived strength or relevance of the frame and must be weighed by the audience it is directed to. It is necessary for the audience to be motivated to weigh the utterance. Motivation to evaluate the consideration consciously will be stimulated when it opposes the person's "frame in thought" (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 110). Framing can work in all three levels of this mentioned above, meaning that it can make new beliefs available, make older, available beliefs accessible or it can turn accessible beliefs into applicable beliefs, also called "strong" beliefs. Strong in this sense refers its resonance with the public, the extent to which people feel it the frame reflects their values and considerations (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 111). While it is important for this research to understand the theory of framing and how framing works it is not the main subject of this research. While the term 'framing' and related terms will return at several

points, this research does not go into whether or not framing actually happens, but through the theory of social constructivism assumes it does.

## **2.2 Terrorism**

In this chapter the concept of terrorism is introduced. The focus is on the main discourses surrounding terrorism. The discourse has changed over time, leading to a different threat evaluation in terms of terrorism than for example forty years ago. Terrorism can be seen as a textbook example of discourse: what you call something has a very direct, real-life impact on people's lives through policy. There are different definitions and uses of terrorism and no definition can ever be agreed on, but the way the term is used for certain attacks rather than other attacks is a matter of politics.

Butko distinguishes between four main schools of thought which comprise four different ways of looking at terrorism and the way the term is being used and perceived. The definition of terrorism is dependent on which school of thought one follows (Butko, 2009, p. 185). The standard or mainstream position is still the most common one in academia and policy-making. It presumes everyone sees terrorism in the same way, namely "as the use or threat of violence to achieve broad political objectives in which innocent civilians are randomly targeted" (Butko, 2009, p. 185). It brands terrorism as 'evil' and 'uncivilized' already for decades, but especially since 9/11. Mainstream scholars therefore tend to focus mostly on the personalities of the perpetrators rather than the causes of the act. Furthermore, they tend to point out that terrorism does not help one attain their goals (Butko, 2009, p. 186). This approach appears to be a tactic to discredit the perpetrator and their acts. Lastly, the field focuses mostly on what they call 'new terrorism', which is, in their view, inherently linked to violent Islamism. In this way, violent Islamism has become synonymous with terrorism, even though not very long ago these terms were reserved for communists rather than radical Muslims (Butko, 2009, p. 186).

The radical position uses a definition of terrorism that positions the United States as a major terrorist actor. They argue that terrorism is in fact to be defined as "the killing of unarmed civilians" (Butko, 2009, p. 187). As a result, one could argue that many states are in fact guilty of terrorism. Another of their main arguments is that terrorism does work, but it just depends on how you measure its effectiveness. Although no governments have been overthrown through terrorism, but other goals, intended or not, have been achieved. Lastly, terrorists are, in the view of radical scholars, rather the strong actors than the weak ones, as mainstream scholars argue. However, those who are branded terrorists are the weak ones. These scholars are accused by mainstream scholars of disloyalty and sometimes even treason because of their critical stance (Butko, 2009, p. 188).

The most popular of the dissenting approaches is the relativist approach. Supporters of this approach focus on the essentially contested nature of the terrorism concept. They agree on one point, though: the term has a negative connotation and is generally used to describe one's adversaries. This makes the act of using the term inherently subjective. To support their argument they point to the changing implications of the concept over time. The larger trend which can be distinguished here is that 'terrorism' is a term used by the powerful to describe the violent resistance by the powerless. This is exemplified by the fact that states engage in activities which could be described as terrorism, but which rarely receive this name (Butko, 2009, p. 189). Terrorism has become a mere military strategic, but the term terrorism does not reflect this development (Butko, 2009, p. 190).

The last perspective, the constructivist position, argues that definitions, conceptions and classifications of terrorism are social constructs which reflect the power relations at play. They reflect and reinforce the interests of these different actors. The most powerful automatically have the most power to impose their definitions upon others (Butko, 2009, p. 190 - 191). The act of defining is a social act which takes place in communication. It is inherently involved with delegitimization, because it gives social meaning to certain interpretations of a situation over others. Main thinkers representing this position argue that these interpretations, also called 'discourses' have as their role to create, maintain and extend power to certain actors over others. They are an "exercise of power; that is, they try to become dominant or hegemonic by discrediting alternative or rival discourses, by promoting themselves as the full and final truth" (Butko, 2009, p. 191). Even though conceptions of terrorism has changed over time, what has not changed is the way in which it reflects the interests of the powerful. The process behind this is that those who decide whether or not something should be called terrorism indirectly answer the question of whether or not they see the act of violence as legitimate or not (Butko, 2009, p. 192). A clear inclination towards branding violence executed by Muslims as terrorism can be observed in the discourse since roughly 9/11 (Butko, 2009, p. 192). This is the approach that is taken in this research, since it is in essence a social constructivist approach to terrorism studies

Also Maurits van der Veen confirms that one of the strongest frames in terrorism at the moment is the organized Islamist terrorism frame. Previous research on the topic of lone actor terrorism shows that there is an inclination to associate terrorism with Islamic extremism. Maurits van der Veen calls this the organized Islamist terrorism (OIT) frame. He noticed that the concept 'terrorism' is reserved for violent acts executed by Islamic extremists or ones which yield 'enough' victims (to make it to the threshold of terrorism), both within the media and politics (Maurits van der Veen, 2014). More

generally speaking Maurits van der Veen argues that an OIT frame leads to three reactions. Firstly, as described above, attacks that do not differ markedly from instances of terrorism were characterized differently, because they were not executed by Islamic extremists (Maurits van der Veen, 2014, p. 75). This has in Norway led to the assumption, while the attack by Breivik on Utøya was still being executed, that it was being executed by Islamic extremist. This assumption in turn led to violence and hateful comments against Muslims on the street (Maurits van der Veen, 2014, p. 84). When it was found out that the perpetrator was a Norwegian right wing extremist, some media argued it was an instance of ‘mass murder’ instead of terrorism, making a turn-around from their initial assumptions and evaluations (Maurits van der Veen, 2014, p. 86).

Secondly, even in those cases when the violent act by a non-Islamist is framed as a terrorist act, in the evaluation and policy discussions focus will still be on Islamist extremism as opposed to the ideology which led the actor to execute the violent act and the perpetrator himself (Maurits van der Veen, 2014, p. 75). One effect of this is that the ideology and real perpetrator will remain underexposed, making an effective reaction to this type of act even more challenging.

Thirdly, lessons from violent acts which have not been framed as terrorism are not (or not sufficiently) included in analyses of terrorism and therefore lessons learned focus only on one type of violent acts, affecting reactions to future incidents (Maurits van der Veen, 2014, p. 75). The violent act and the subsequent reaction are not included in databases of terrorism and are harder to find when searching for for example news items on the subject, because the term ‘terrorism’ and related terms are not found in the articles describing the incidents.

One could argue that only the first reaction to the incidents, the different characterization of violent acts executed by non-Islamists from those executed by Islamist extremists, is a direct consequence of the OIT frame. The other two reactions are then consequences (at least in part) of the first reaction. It is the characterization as ‘not an act of terrorism’ which expresses and at the same time reinforces the frame and which through this affects policy decisions, placing the first reaction at the very least at a different position within a hierarchy. The attacks by Breivik, but also other attacks and attempts at attacks in the Nordics show us that no country is immune to the threat of terrorism, in whichever form (Sallamaa, 2014, p. 4 - 5). Furthermore, it showed us that Muslims do not have a patent on terrorism, making the Western world more susceptible to home-grown terrorism. Everything depends, however, on how one frames it. School shootings, for example, are often not portrayed as terrorism, although they do bear similarities to attacks which are called terrorism. This leads to misleading statistics on the amount of terrorist attacks and, indirectly on the perceived ter-

rorist threat (Malkki, 2011, p. 207).

This thesis looks specifically at the representation of the violent attacks executed by Anders Behring Breivik in Oslo and on the island of Utøya on 22 July 2011. Previous research on portrayals in Finnish media of home-grown, lone actor terrorism showed a different treatment of the London and Madrid bombings from the Oslo and Utøya attacks. The latter received far more attention on the psychopathological aspects than the two other attacks (Sallamaa, 2014, p. 119). Other research also points to the different framing of extreme-right terrorism from religiously motivated terrorism, laying bare the effects of a possible bias. Especially the Breivik case is very relevant in this respect, since it differs from most cases of home-grown terrorism in several aspects, one of which is the large scale of the attack, another the systematic preparation which went into the attack, making it an ideal case to research the discourse of terrorist attacks. If a bias can be found in this case, it has been more effectively proven than in other, more vague cases (for example with less casualties or by someone with a Muslim upbringing but born and raised in the West).

Although not a full comparative research, this research will give some idea of the way in which people talk about terrorism in general. Through this research we will be able to determine what is problematic when using the term 'terrorism' and why. It will lay bare the assumptions people have when talking about terrorism, which is of great meaning to the field of terrorism studies, since it lies at the core of each and every study in the field. How one speaks about terrorism and what one assumes when hearing the word determines the cases one chooses for the research. It also indirectly steers the analysis in a certain direction, if one is not aware of these assumptions. Being aware of them makes it easier to mitigate bias based on those assumptions.

Research on portrayal of homegrown terrorism as seen from outside of the society in which the attack is executed is limited in number. Most research looks into the influence of the attack on discourse in the society it happened in, disregarding the fact that an attack can have repercussions also on the other side of the border. This research aims to correct just that.

### **2.3 Lone actor terrorism**

In this chapter the background of lone actor terrorism will be further explored. The focus of the chapter is the perception of lone actor terrorism in policy making and academia. These perceptions are expressed in different ways and have an impact on the possible range of actions, as explained in the chapter on social constructivism. The perceptions in academia and policy making especially make sure that the dominant discourse is maintained. We will also explore the history of leaderless resistance and Breivik's position in that history.

First and foremost, what hampers research and policy-making most is the essentially contested character of the term ‘terrorism’ (Spaaij, 2010, p. 856). The term is used for a wide range of manifestations. Spaaij finds that the term is a social construct, the use of which is an expression of the interests of the person using the term to describe an event. Its use is strongly linked to (de)legitimization, criminalization and moral justification of responses. Its use is asymmetrical: it is often used by states about non-state acts, leaving one to wonder why it would not be applied to state acts (Spaaij, 2012, p. 15).

However, there are some aspects of terrorism which keep returning and which are taken for granted in certain periods in time. Terrorism has long been seen as a group activity (Spaaij, 2010, p. 855). Recently, a change can be perceived in academia, where lone actor terrorism is being taken more seriously by seeing it as another form of terrorism, rather than crime (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 6 - 7). Some even go as far as claiming that lone actor terrorism is a new phenomenon. However, what is new is the focus on globalization and the reliance on internet and internet-based communication methods for their activities (Joose, 2015, p. 18). Joosse’s research supports Kaplan’s claim that “lone wolf and autonomous cell violence is as old as time itself” (2014, p. 1). Kaplan argues it goes back as far as Biblical stories, but clearly the amounts of attention and difference in framing in modern times compared to thousands of years ago, or even decades ago, should be noted (Kaplan, 2014, p. 1).

The term that is generally used, also in academia, but especially in journalism, for violent acts by a single actor is ‘lone wolf terrorism’. Spaaij and Hamm argue that the term ‘lone wolf terrorism’ is not necessarily lacking a clear definition, but rather that there are so many different definitions present in the literature that no real comparison can be made between different studies (Spaaij & Hamm, 2015, p. 168). The differences between different fields of study are large as well, leading to more confusion. In a scholarly sense, the word is used in its most general sense to denote someone who is not affiliated with a group or network in the planning and exercise of a violent act, but there are also contradictory legal definitions. To make the confusion even greater there is a wide array of terms which is used interchangeably with ‘lone wolf’, such as ‘lone actor’, ‘lone operator’, ‘leaderless’, ‘solo actor’, etc. (Spaaij & Hamm, 2015, p. 169). Some scholars even include groups of people up until three in the definition. Due to the limited amount of these types of attacks in the Western world this has had a large impact on research in the field with people concluding that a large increase in lone wolf terrorist attacks is taking place over the years 2010-2013, which is based on one single attack, executed by two people. Even very rigorous definitions sometimes allow for indi-



rect influence by enablers. That someone didn't receive direct help from another person does not mean they operate in a vacuum (Spaaij & Hamm, 2015, p. 170; Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 4).

However, some academics argue that the definition of lone wolf terrorism also requires of the actor to be ideologically unaffiliated: "the lone wolf metaphor evokes images of ideologically and socially unaffiliated individuals, and directs the attention away from the social character of language and political narratives" (Berntzen & Sandberg, 2014, p. 760). Berntzen and Sandberg argue that specifically the anti-Islamic movement is one which frames itself as a social movement and that lone wolves who are inspired by the ideas of the movement should be seen as socially embedded in the movement (Berntzen & Sandberg, 2014, p. 759). However, in their paper they do acknowledge that even though Breivik used common far right arguments and quoted sources from the movement extensively he also went much further in his rhetoric by justifying violent resistance and incorporating a jihadist narrative (in which Islam is replaced by Christendom) into his arguments than most of the people they claim belong to the same social movement (Berntzen & Sandberg, 2014, p. 770). It is therefore mostly a difference in interpretation of the value and weight of these differences for the definition of lone actor violence. In this way it is for a large part a matter of definition: if one clear definition could be agreed upon the ambiguity in interpretation would be greatly limited. Berntzen and Sandberg's article could also be seen as a critique of the way in which lone actors are being seen in the media. When evaluating a person and their acts we need to look at the social aspect of discourse as well and not see them as completely isolated from the rest of society.

Borum et al. acknowledge the existence of different 'types' of lone actors and place lone actor terrorism on a spectrum with three dimensions: loneness, direction and motivation (Borum et al., 2012, p. 389). They created a system in order to be able to categorize different types of lone actor violent acts. The three dimensions refer to how much help a perpetrator received, how autonomous he was in all decisions, and what motivated him to act violently (Borum et al., 2012, p. 393-395). They argue that it is not useful to create dichotomies, but prefer to place violent acts and their perpetrators on a continuum (Borum et al., 2012, p. 395-396). This still does not really make comparison of studies any easier, since it does not help eliminate all different ideas of what a lone actor is, but places them all next to each other and accords equal value to all conceptions of lone actor terrorism. The analytical usefulness is therefore lost, making it rather a description of the range of options. Also for this research that approach is less useful, since I will not focus on whether or not someone is a lone actor, but how it is being portrayed. A simpler definition is more useful in this case.



A related concept to lone actor terrorism is that of 'leaderless resistance'. There is about as much disagreement about what this exactly entails as about lone actor terrorism. Leaderless resistance is seen by Joosse as the ideology of the lone wolf (2015, p. 15). It is seen as characterized by an asymmetrical struggle of a weaker actor against, for example, 'the system' or at least something larger than the actor. It is in this way seen as an act of desperation and as failure (Joosse, 2015, p. 1 - 2). Names which are mentioned as the few examples of success tend to be Timothy McVeigh, Ted Kaczynski (the Unabomber) and Anders Breivik, but recently leaderless jihad is becoming a more common phenomenon as well (Joosse, 2015, p. 2). Both in academia and in the media figures active in leaderless resistance are framed as loners and losers in order to isolate and depoliticize their acts. This is done especially by people who share the same ideas, but not the same ideas on how to change the wrongs in society, but also more widely (Joosse, 2015, p. 7 - 9).

One of the most mentioned examples of lone actor terrorism in modern times are the attacks by Anders Behring Breivik in Oslo and Utøya. It is complicated to place Breivik in a timeline of lone actor terrorism, since this depends on agreement on the definition of lone actor terrorism. Timothy McVeigh, for example, had help in terms of logistics (Kaplan, 2014, p. 3). Many of the jihadists which execute so-called lone actor terrorist attacks did so in the name of large terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda or IS. In many cases these organizations also claim ownership of attacks because it suits their propaganda, not because it was actually executed by them. It is therefore hard to tell whether or not an attack was actually lone actor terrorism or something else. However, many claim that most lone actor terrorism is related to Islam either through the actor supporting Islamic goals or opposing them (Kaplan, 2014, p. 3). In 2011, however, Breivik's anti-Islamic home-grown terrorism took most people by surprise (Sallamaa, 2014, p. 3).

We will now go into the history of lone actor terrorism and leaderless resistance. The wider definitions allow for the history of lone actor terrorism to go back to pre-Biblical times, whereas those using a more limited definition argue it started in the 1980s or even with Breivik's attacks. Simon argues that lone actors are generally innovative and creative perpetrators. The first vehicle bombing, in 1920 on Wall Street, was an act of lone actor terrorism, although not at the time considered to be such. Likewise, lone actors, he argues, stand at the beginning of many firsts in terrorism, such as the first midair airplane bombing in 1955 and the first hijacking in 1961 (2015, p. 3). Often recurring names in discussions of lone actor terrorism are Timothy McVeigh, responsible for the Oklahoma City bombing, Theodore Kaczynski, also called the Unabomber, who left package bombs in order to further his anti-industrial ideology, Nidal Malik Hasan, who killed several of his

fellow soldiers and Theo van Gogh, who killed a prominent Dutch politician by the name of Pim Fortuyn (Simon, 2015, p. 3 - 5). Regardless of where scholars put Breivik in the timeline of lone actor terrorism, it is generally seen as one of the most gruesome lone actor attacks (Simon, 2014, p. 5 - 6). The most commonly mentioned names in relation to this phenomenon are all rather recent, though, supporting the stance that it is a new or growing phenomenon. Many of the older instances of lone actor terrorism, especially those in Europe, are executed by actors driven by extreme right ideologies (Mareš & Stojar, 2016, p. 66). Leaderless resistance, however, gained real traction among right wing extremists after the publication of Louis Beam's "Leaderless Resistance" in 1992 (Mareš & Stojar, 2016, p. 67). It should be noted though, that most of the examples by Mareš and Stojar mention that in one way or another the mental stability of the perpetrators was often in question.

Christopher Hewitt ascribed the turn to leaderless resistance to an increase in intelligence activity in the US. Due to heavy surveillance and infiltration techniques used by government agencies it became unfeasible or impossible to conduct terrorist activities as a group (Michael, 2012, p. 33). Right wing terrorism started in the 1980s. Due to the marginal position of extreme right organizations, the general people were dismissive of any really radical ideas and actions. Some organizations did, however, form. In 1984 with the fatal confrontation between the FBI and Robert Jay Mathews of "The Order", a racist, anti-Semitic and mostly anti-government criminal organization, the state became the full-fledged enemy of right wing extremists (Michael, 2012, p. 35). The events around Mathews are in fact almost a copy of the story of William Luther Pierce's "The Turner Diaries", which turned into the most widely read book in the extreme right (Michael, 2012, p. 36 - 37). After this and some other failed attempts at terrorist attacks the far right gave up on their methods and moved to act by themselves or in small, non-hierarchical cells, terrorism analyst Bruce Hoffman concludes. However, one can also argue that it is a necessity for a variety of reasons: the lone actor is unable to cooperate due to mental imbalances, organizations cannot be protected against betrayal or infiltration and intelligence activities make communication near impossible. Whether or not it is an actual phenomenon also amongst right wing terrorists remains to be seen. Michael argues it is a term which has been applied to the far right in a top-down fashion by journalists, governments and academics. Those terrorists who use the term are "psychopaths with little if any ideological sophistication" (Michael, 2012, p. 38). However, the term was first used in 1965 by a key figure in the American far right, Richard Cotton of the National Youth Alliance (Michael, 2012, p. 42).

He had to compete with the theory of mass action, which states that when you bundle forces, you will achieve more. This idea had a strong basis in the movement with a well-known figure behind it: George Lincoln Rockwell, founder of the American Nazi Party (Michael, 2012, p. 42). The public did not favor leaderless resistance at that time though and only by the late 1980s did the theory of mass action lose force due to disillusionment on the part of many far right supporters (Michael, 2012, p. 43). Around the mid-1990s leaderless resistance gained broader support among the far right. In 1992 Louis Beam, a firebrand orator and activist, talked about leaderless resistance at a large conference in Colorado, organized by Pete Peters. Because other organizational models were unworkable or impractical, Beam rejected the more hierarchical, organized model in favor of a non-hierarchical model of ‘phantom cells’, small cells which function independently. With the release of William Pierce’s novel ‘Hunter’ the popularity of leaderless resistance increased even more (Michael, 2012, p. 45). Other influential far right supporters which stimulated this trend were David Lane and Alex Curtis (Michael, 2012, p. 46). Interestingly enough, Breivik himself was not in contact with hardcore extremist like these thinkers which have been mentioned above. The ideas he ‘borrowed’ for his manifesto were very much part of the zeitgeist which he took further into the extreme. His leaderless resistance, could be argued, is not necessarily a thought-through tactic but rather a result of rational thinking: he realized that if he shared his plans with anyone, they would disapprove. However, he does actively promote this way of working in order to stimulate others to do like he did and he paints a romantic, militaristic picture of lone actors, like Joosse finds Wiebo Ludwig did as well.

Joosse finds that the lone wolf Wiebo Ludwig used the ‘Spartacus’ frame often. Through this frame he portrayed himself as a revolutionary vanguardist, which he calls an “‘ideology of effervescence’ that aggrandizes and legitimizes the struggle” (Joosse, 2015, p. 15). This has as an effect that other people are more likely to join the struggle. In this context he also makes the link to Breivik’s attacks, because Breivik shows similar tendencies in his manifesto (Joosse, 2015, p. 15). Although not intended, this ideology of effervescence confirms the image of lone actors as losers with narcissistic tendencies. On a larger level this “making something out of nothing” in order to elevate their actions to a higher level can be seen as a tactic to become part of a larger movement, a phenomenon which Kaplan (2014, p. 16) refers to with the concept of ‘new tribalism’, hereby depicting a non-static form of tribalism. Through their rhetoric, Joosse argues, lone actors try to become a part of an imagined community. Breivik is mentioned as exemplary of aspirational tribalism in which the lone actor strives to become part of the movement through their actions and expressions, because he

claimed for a long time that he was part of a larger organization, which later turned out not to be true (Joosse, 2015). Joosse argues that leaderlessness is more of an ideology, not an actuality of leaderless resistance. It is a propaganda tool to counter the discourse of the lone actor as a loser and to portray them rather as leaders of a revolution. By adopting the term as an organizational model, academia provides these terrorist movements with legitimacy (Joosse, 2015, p. 18). This is where the distinction lies between the lone wolf, who can be portrayed as a crazy person who is physically alone as well as in their thinking and leaderless resistance, which has more of a rhetorical function. The actors employing the rhetorics of leaderless resistance tend to enjoy support. He goes on to argue that also lone wolves need the “meaning-conferring function” of the leaderless resistance rhetoric, which leads them to also use it.

The most problematic aspect of lone actor terrorism in terms of policy making is the fact that lone actors often radicalize quietly. They realize that they should lay low and not attract attention. Furthermore, they do not need to communicate with accomplices, which makes intelligence gathering complicated (Kaplan, 2014, p. 4). An even larger concern is that of weapons of mass destruction falling into their hands (Kaplan, 2014, p. 2). This has repercussions for perception as well: even though lone actors are described as crazy loners, they are also seen as a large security threat due to their low profile and potentially destructive means.

Defining lone actor terrorism is problematic: what is terrorism? How is it different from violent hate crimes for example? Does it involve more death, destruction and injuries? When is it a crime performed by someone with mental health problems and is an ideological component necessary for a violent act to be called terrorism? Also: the two are not mutually exclusive and it is hard to find out what the real motivation was, even if the perpetrator survives. The problem of defining lone actor terrorism is related to the problem of defining terrorism. One could argue that lone actor terrorism is ‘terrorism executed by a single, unaffiliated actor’. However, the question then still remains: what is terrorism? This is a question which remains unanswered until today, although not for lack of trying. Of those definitions which exist a large part sees communal action as essential to terrorism, thereby precluding the existence of lone actor terrorism. These factors are the reasons why research into lone actor terrorism has remained so limited (Feldman, 2013, p. 271). This definitional unclarity has a real-life influence on policy, such as counter-terrorism policy through the perception of acts of violence as terrorism or other types of violence. The frame of lone actor terrorism influences the way people see and think about the perpetrator and their actions in many ways, thereby legitimizing certain reactions rather than others.

Although lone actor terrorism and lone wolf terrorism are the main terms used to describe terrorism by a single person or a small cell I will refer to Breivik's attacks as lone actor violence in some contexts. In some cases it is not logical to refer to them as terrorism because the discourse does not consider it such. Exemplary for this use of 'lone actor violence' is the passage in which it is explained that terrorism and violence by a lone actor are seen as mutually exclusive. It would be a contradiction in terms to use the term 'lone actor terrorism'.

### 3. Research design

This chapter focusses on the method of Critical Discourse Analysis, which underlies this research. The method is perfect for a research founded on social constructivism, because it focuses on the assumptions underlying statements and discourses in general. It tries to deconstruct discourses in order to lay bare the assumptions that are embedded in statements. After that, the data used in this research will be addressed. In the third subchapter the background of the data used is explained, namely the development of the attacks by Anders Behring Breivik. This is important to get an understanding of the context in which the analyzed data should be placed. Lastly, in subchapter four the limitations of the research are addressed.

The main research question is formulated in broad terms. Through the sub-research questions the main research question becomes more focused on the terrorism aspect of the framing of the attacks by Breivik. Many factors influence whether or not Breivik and his attacks are seen as terrorism or not and these sub-questions together form the main factors. The expectation is that the term 'terrorism' is reserved mainly for organized jihadist terrorism: acts of violence which required a lot of preparation and coordination, with a large societal impact, executed by Muslims in the name of religion and executed by or in close cooperation with a large organization. Because Breivik's attack did fulfill the first two assumptions, but was executed by a home-grown terrorist in the name of a far right ideology and executed by a lone actor this research focuses on the representation of especially those characteristics which differ from what is expected to be considered 'pure' terrorism by most people. These are the most salient characteristics which are being used to justify a non-terrorist framing of the attacks.

The case of Breivik was chosen because of the ambiguous context of the attacks. Breivik acted on his own, inspired by far right ideology. He created his own version of the far right ideology out of different, mainstream sources and connected a different conclusion to the ideas: the necessity to start a violent revolution in order to solve the perceived problem. Because he published a manifesto including his diary online right before the attacks it is known what his motives were and how he prepared the attacks. Furthermore, he himself didn't die in the attacks, because he wanted to live to explain his deeds. Compared to what are considered 'typical' terrorist attacks in this day and age, quite some similarities can be found. This is also the reason why it can be expected that there is an interesting discourse around these attacks and the person of Breivik as people try to give meaning to the events. The attacks' deviation, in the sense that the attacker is a Norwegian-born man, from what is considered standard terrorism might lead to a re-evaluation of the terms in which similar

cases of lone actor terrorism are discussed. The way in which an attack is being discussed has repercussions in many ways, such as for the type of policy it allows or the stigmatization of certain parts of the population. A change of discourse may then have beneficial effects for the stigmatized groups which were earlier being blamed for violent attacks.

The research questions are the following:

How are the attacks by Anders Behring Breivik framed in Dutch, Finnish, British and international media?

1. How do the media evaluate Breivik's acting alone?
2. Is Breivik seen as a terrorist or framed in other terms?
3. How are Breivik's attacks contextualized?

### **3.1 Method**

The method used in this research is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This method is being used within the field of International Relations (IR), especially in critical approaches to the field. Critical theories can be seen as a family of theories (Price & Reus-Smit, 1998, p. 260), comprising of the following, emancipatory theories: poststructuralism (or postmodernism), feminism and postcolonialism (Dixit & Stump, 2015, p. 78). A sub-strand of poststructuralism is the social constructivist approach, which is the theory underlying this research and the method of CDA.

CDA is a field which originates in linguistics, but which has an interdisciplinary basis. Just like social constructivism, critical discourse analysis sees language as a source of power. Individual subjectivity and the operation of rules and procedures enable the construction of disciplinary practices (Bryman, 2012, p. 537). CDA, as opposed to discourse analysis, argues that there is "a pre-existing material reality that constrains individual agency" (Bryman, 2012, p. 537) and studies discourses within their social contexts and power relationships. The method involves analyzing language in its context, because it is grounded in the idea that language is a social phenomenon and that language is the source of social inequalities (Le, 2006, p. 13). The majority of CDA methods engages with three metafunctions of language: the textual, the ideational and the interpersonal. The textual concerns the content of the message, the ideational the way in which the textual reflects society and societal trends and the interpersonal the way in which the textual acts influences and interacts with society (Le, 2006, p. 14). The study of these metafunctions can be done within the text and within society, by considering the text vis-à-vis its context. By combining the two, CDA grounds itself both within linguistics and in the social context of text (Le, 2006, p. 15). The goal of CDA is to find

out how a discourse is constructed and how it is maintained (Bryman, 2012, p. 537).

Like Jackson (2016, p. 81) I use an approach to CDA which uses a notion of social causality. This is the notion which states that norms and rules cause the things people and institutions do. They structure the behaviour of people. CDA tries to find out how certain actions have been made possible and tries to free people from the influence of structures, also called 'emancipation' (Jackson, 2016, p. 82).

The theory of social constructivism aims to, as described earlier, determine discourses and find out how they were created and for what purpose. The main expression of and influence on discourses is text, both spoken and written. It uses the same ontological and epistemological principles as CDA, therefore making CDA the most logical choice of method to be used in this research. It allows taking into consideration the senders who choose and manipulate the intellectual and cultural traditions that shape the representations of our past, receivers, or consumers who use or ignore the traditions mentioned before and the objects through which memory is transmitted, which are the traditions mentioned before (Le, 2006, p. 12).

The form of CDA which Jackson employs follows two stages. Firstly, the researcher immerses themselves in the material to be studied, especially the material by the people who are considered most important in the field to be studied. In this stage the outlines of the discourse are sketched. Whenever no new insights are found from the material, this stage ends (Jackson, 2016, p. 82). The second stage subjects the findings to first- and second-order critique. The first-order critique looks to the text itself in order to find contradictions, mistakes, misconceptions and instabilities. It aims to destabilize the discourse and to point out that discourses are subject to change, inherently contested and political. The second-order critique subjects the discourse to social theory and wider research findings in order to discover the ideological effects of the discourse (Jackson, 2016, p. 82).



## 3.2 Data

This research concerns the framing of lone actor terrorism in the media in Finland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. I will be comparing the language used and topics discussed within news articles from the newspapers Helsingin Sanomat (Finland), de Volkskrant (The Netherlands), the Guardian (United Kingdom) and the New York Times (United States) in order to distill and deconstruct the dominant frames surrounding the subject of lone actor terrorism. These newspapers have been chosen on the basis of their centre-left nature, which is critical of the far right and therefore of Breivik's objectives and will be more likely to present different opinions on the matter. Due to the similar ideological orientation the results are somewhat more comparable. Also, they are all daily newspapers. They enjoy similar status and levels of reliability in their respective countries. However, due to the language, the Guardian and the New York Times are read by large groups of people also outside of the countries in which they are based. These newspapers therefore have a somewhat more international character than the Dutch and Finnish newspapers. At the same time they are also based in and employ journalists from the Anglo-Saxon world, which has more experience with terrorist attacks in their own societies and are therefore likely to have a different approach to terrorism than the Dutch and Finnish newspapers.

The reason for choosing news media is that they for a large part decide how people understand the context of an event, of the possible solutions and what it is that happened. Certain assumptions and interpretations will therefore also be internalized by the public through the status they are granted by being printed/published on the website of a national newspaper. News media can then provide legitimacy to either the terrorists or the government's reaction and policies through the way in which they portray the events and the reaction by the government and by giving certain aspects more weight than other aspects (Falkheimer & Olsson, p. 71).

The articles by De Volkskrant and Helsingin Sanomat were accessed online by choosing the correct category of articles. For De Volkskrant this is 'Aanslagen in Noorwegen' (attacks in Norway), for Helsingin Sanomat 'Norjan joukkomurha' = (Norway's mass murder) and 'Anders Behring Breivik', the Guardian and New York times 'Anders Behring Breivik'. In the case of Helsingin Sanomat the articles in the correct categories started only halfway through September. I therefore manually selected other articles in the period before that by using the search string 'Norja' (Norway), leading to mostly hits on the shooting.

After selecting all the articles and importing them into a reference manager the collection amounted

to a total of over 1500 articles. Since this amount exceeds the time limits for this thesis by far, I limited the articles manually by choosing articles of the period of two weeks after the attacks, one week after the beginning of his trial, and 3 days after the presentation of the verdict. These articles comprise the following time periods:

22 July 2011 - 5 August 2011

16 April 2012 - 23 April 2012

24 August 2012 - 31 August 2012

This division is made on the basis of the idea that new developments often stimulate new analyses of the situation at hand. These decisive points in time can drastically change the direction of a discourse and are therefore helpful in establishing whether there are any differences in the discourses between these countries. The articles were limited to the longer articles with an analytic or interpretive character. Especially de Volkskrant had published many articles which came straight from the large news agencies. These articles offer little interpretation but describe the events in a dry fashion, referring to the attacks with terms such as ‘bomaanslag’ (bomb attack) or ‘schietpartij’ (shooting). They are also often relatively short and therefore provide little context. I manually removed articles from ANP and Reuters from the selection, leaving longer articles written by ‘redactie’ (editorial office) in the selection. Although these articles are often for a large part based on articles by the large news agencies, these articles feature types of interpretation by placing the article within the context and giving some more interpretation to the article. Other, longer articles with a mixture of news agency material and material by the editorial office were also left in the selection if they were deemed relevant. Articles which discussed Breivik and his deeds only in an indirect manner were eliminated from the selection.

The articles were entered into datasets in Atlas Ti, software for qualitative data analysis. I read the articles critically a first time, after which I assigned different statements different labels. The labels were based on the type of discourse it reflected based on the underlying assumptions distilled from the statement. These labels served more as reminders than as a basis for any statistics. It served to get an idea of what the dominant discourses are. In this way, Atlas Ti was more of a tool to systematically organize and process the data. While reading the materials the first time, I already made notes which I refined while reading the materials a second time.

Due to the different national contexts in which these discourses are situated and the specific and unique case the results will only have limited value for generalization. It will not be possible to

generalize these results to a global or even European level. The countries have for example different amounts of experience with terrorism, a different media culture, different types of experience with immigrants and extremism, which will lead to very different results. However, for the sake of pointing out the influence of discourse this differentiation is the most ideal setting. By comparing different discourses and analyzing them from their respective contexts this will lead to more in-depth insights into framing theory and makes attribution of differences more credible.

### **3.3 Case: Breivik's attack**

On the 22nd of June Anders Behring Breivik executed a violent attack on the capital of Norway and a Summer camp at the island of Utøya. His preparation for the attacks started five years before the actual attacks. Everything Breivik did in the years leading up to the attacks was done in order to prepare himself for the attacks in several ways: playing games to practice his shooting, taking a 'sabbatical' in the year 2006 – 2007 to play an unrelated game because he "deserved to" with the upcoming so-called suicide action, remaining social in order to not attract unwanted attention, making his mother believe he had gotten addicted to gaming as a cover for writing his manifest and working out (Pidd, 2012h; Pidd, 2012i). He was determined to execute his attacks in order to further his political agenda. From the moment he had decided this he put everything he had into the project.

Breivik explains later in court that he prepared himself mentally for his attacks. People speculated he was insane because he was capable of shooting for hours on end without mentally breaking down. He explained that: "In many ways it is a protection mechanism [...]. We have seen from military traditions you cannot send an unprepared person into war" (Pidd, 2012l). He trained himself not to feel empathy and to speak in a similar manner: with technical, de-emotionalized language. He described himself as "extremely mentally disciplined" (Jacobsen & Maier-Katkin, 2015, p. 147). He saw his project like a battle for which he prepared himself for a long time, also physically, by working out in the gym and walking outdoors, strapped up with two backpacks, each filled with 30 kilos of stones (Pidd, 2012n).

Breivik used the preparation time also for reading far right works on the internet and writing his 1500-page manifesto. The manifesto served both as an explanation of his ideas and as a guide for people planning future attacks. Breivik provides practical tips on how to avoid suspicion, build bombs and in other ways prepare yourself for the task at hand. The manifesto consists of three books. The first explains how left wing politicians manipulate the truth in order to further their policies which will lead Europe to destruction. The second book goes into the source of that destruction: how Islam will wipe out European culture. In the third book he explains how this is to be

stopped: he set up the Order of the Knights Templar which is supposed to execute a coup against the politically correct left wing (Vervaeke, 2011a). The reason he chose the youth camp as a target for the shooting was that in his view The Labour Party was complicit to the threat posed by Islam, because it allowed immigrants to enter Norway and manipulated the truth about immigration (Vervaeke, 2011a). Right before he left to execute his attacks he sent the manifesto to 13.700 email addresses throughout the world (Vervaeke, 2011a).

Breivik started by detonating a car bomb in the center of Oslo, in the district of the executive government, hereby destroying several buildings, killing eight people and injuring many more. Luckily most people were on vacation or had already left the office, because it was a Friday afternoon in the middle of Summer break. After this, Breivik drove to the island Utøya, 40 kilometers north-west of Oslo. At that moment the Labour Party was running a Summer camp for youngsters at the island. Breivik pretended to be a police man and told them to gather round him because he had information on the attack on Oslo for them. Soon after he started shooting the young people on the island in cold blood. The ones that would escape would, he presumed, most likely drown in the ice cold water, since the distance to shore was around 500 meters at the shortest point. Some indeed drowned, although mostly due to Breivik shooting at them while they were swimming. It took 1,5 hours before the Special Forces arrived, to which Breivik surrendered immediately. He declared: “The police are my brothers. I am going to save Norway from islamization” (Jacobsen & Maier-Katkin, 2015, p. 138). In the interrogations shortly afterwards Breivik confessed to everything, explaining his extremist views and goals. He had wanted to ‘maintain the purity of Norway’ and incite a civil war, which would last sixty years (Jacobsen & Maier-Katkin, 2015, p. 138 - 139). He claimed to have acted rationally and in support of a revolutionary organization (Jacobsen & Maier-Katkin, 2015, p. 139).

Many of the youngsters were wounded physically, all of them mentally. The ones which were hurt were retrieved and brought to hotels and hospitals. Some died of their wounds there. Aftercare was also provided in terms of mental health care. Schools and churches paid more attention to their youngsters and were open to anyone wanting to talk, next to the obvious mental healthcare professionals (Hilttunen, 2011; Kauhanen, 2011f). Aftercare didn't start at the same time for everyone. Some youngsters were saved while Breivik was still out shooting on the island. Brave people from close to the shooting location took their boats out to pick up children from the water, all while risking their own lives. Several of them came back a few times. A lesbian couple was known to have saved 40 teenagers from the water, others 20 to 30. Many of these people had no prior knowledge of

what to do in such a situation, but followed their instincts in treating the children (Kaveney, 2011; Mala, 2011).

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of April 2012 Breivik was brought before court. Before the start of the court case, the focus was mostly on the ideological aspect. However, focus shifted towards Breivik's alleged insanity during the court case. Discussion on Breivik's sanity continues during the court case due to the large ramifications for his verdict. If Breivik was what is in legal terms called 'non compos mentis' (of unsound mind) he can not be held fully responsible, because he did not act as motivated by reason, but by some sort of false sense of reality. The approach to his punishment would then be much more focused on rehabilitation and mental guidance than if he knew what he was doing. Initially Breivik was deemed insane in a (leaked) report by the court's psychiatrists. However, a later report commissioned by the court denied that result and declared him sane (HS, 2012f).

On Friday 24 August 2012 the court case against Anders Behring Breivik came to an end. He was held to be sane and therefore held responsible for the act perpetrated on 22 July 2011. He was found guilty of terrorism and sentenced to 21 years in prison, with the caveat that if he turned out to pose a threat to society still after 21 years he could be imprisoned for consecutive periods of five years, most likely indefinitely. The judge remarked he would probably be found to still be dangerous after 21 years, especially since Breivik stated he would do it again and because he thinks extreme violence is necessary (HS, 2012g).

Adjudication serves the goal of closure in several ways: through retribution, reconciliation, incapacitation and deterrence. These categories are not mutually exclusive. Retribution involves the punishment of the perpetrator in a manner which is congruent to the amount of suffering caused to the victims. In this view, the state is seen as the agent of vengeance on behalf of the victim (Vago, 2012, p. 201). Although Beatrice de Graaf argued that the Norwegians in general did not have very vindictive sentiments towards Breivik, this undoubtedly does not go for everyone. Some Norwegians surely felt some satisfaction at Breivik 'getting what he deserves' and the adjudication of Breivik therefore provided closure to those people. De Graaf, researcher at the Center for Terrorism and Counterterrorism of Leiden University, argues that more important factors were reconciliation and providing a platform to the survivors and next of kin of those killed for sharing their grief and frustrations. Reconciliation should be interpreted as showing the world that the open Norwegian society cannot be destroyed (Volkskrant, 2012q). A similar interpretation arose from the media: survivors, their relatives and those of who had not survived the attacks were satisfied with the verdict. They mainly states they felt it was good that he is being held accountable for his acts (Townsend,

2012a; Borger, 2012).

Other ways in which adjudication is known to provide closure are incapacitation and deterrence. The former concerns the specific perpetrator and the action of punishing, the result of which is that the perpetrator cannot perform a similar act again. The latter, deterrence, occurs in several forms. Individual or specific deterrence frightens the perpetrator into not doing what he did again, even when set free at a later point, because the punishment was so strong. General deterrence prevents other criminals from following down the same path, because they see that the potential downsides are great (Vago, 2012, p. 201)

The case of Breivik was chosen because of the ambiguous context of the attacks. Breivik acted on his own, inspired by far right ideology. He created his own version of the far right ideology out of different sources and connected a different conclusion to the ideas: to start a violent revolution in order to solve the perceived problem. Because he published a manifesto including his diary online right before the attacks it is known what his motives were and how he prepared the attacks. Furthermore, he himself didn't die in the attacks, because he wanted to live to explain his deeds. Compared to what are considered 'typical' terrorist attacks in this day and age, quite some similarities can be found. This is also the reason why it can be expected that there is an interesting discourse around these attacks and the person of Breivik as people try to give meaning to the events. The attacks' deviation, in the sense that the attacker is a Norwegian-born man, from what is considered standard might lead to a re-evaluation of the terms in which similar cases of lone actor violence are discussed. The way in which an attack is being discussed has repercussions in many ways, such as for the type of policy it allows or the stigmatization of certain parts of the population. A change of discourse may then have beneficial effects for the stigmatized groups which were earlier being blamed for violent attacks.

From the bibliography on the attacks compiled by the Norwegian Research Ethics Committees (<https://www.etikkom.no/en/our-work/about-us/coordinating-research-on-the-terrorist-attacks-227-2011/Ferdige-prosjekter/bibliografi/>) it becomes clear that most social sciences and humanities research on Breivik's attacks focuses on the impact on immigration discourse and the multicultural society, the phenomenon of counterjihadist terrorism, the discourse of Breivik's manifesto, Breivik's life and radicalization and the challenges for the Norwegian society after the attacks. A similar result emerged from searches in library catalogues. Very little to no attention has been paid to the framing of the attacks in terms of terrorism or insanity. Besides benefiting the general research on terrorism framing this research therefore contributes to the body of literature.

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### 3.4 Limitations

It is complicated to say something definite about something as erratic as language use. Every journalist or expert is different and has a different frame of reference. Furthermore, the context of articles is often slightly different due to them being written in reply to an event. The context of the articles therefore also changes slightly with every development. This research has been written while keeping in mind that there is a sense of inequality in the way words related to terrorism are used. In order to show this more definitely a thorough comparative analysis will have to be done in which the Breivik case is compared to for example the London or Madrid cases or another large attack in which the perpetrator had a religious ideology and was of a nationality foreign to the attacked country. Especially the Madrid case would be enlightening, because the authorities claimed at first that it was an attack by the ETA. Also in the Oslo case there was speculation about the background of the attacker and this could therefore provide for interesting comparison.

The amount of articles was unfairly distributed between newspapers. While this may not have posed a large problem in the first phase, the second and third phase show a far larger relative and real discrepancy. This has therefore impacted the generalizability of the latter two phases and especially the third phase. This goes mostly for the New York Times, where a steep decline in materials occurred in the second and third phase. This already shows the decrease in salience of the topic and the amount of interest especially at the other side of the pond. These large differences between time periods and countries led me to decide to analyze all articles together rather than per time slot and also with all newspapers combined. However, at times I have tried to differentiate between the different phases and I have aimed to remain sensitive to differences between the newspapers.

## 4. Analysis

In this chapter the main observations distilled from the data while comparing different newspapers and different timeframes are discussed. Attention is paid to the different national contexts in which the articles were written and which actors were of main importance for which discourse. No large differences were discovered between the national discourses. All discourses took the attacks by Breivik to be in the first place something other than terrorism. Only in the second place terrorism-related terms were used to describe Breivik and the attacks. The attacks sparked a discussion in all four countries, with different nuances and sometimes slightly different conclusions in the different countries. These nuances will be discussed in the following chapter.

In the following subchapters I go into the different aspects of the terrorism discourse surrounding the Breivik case. The chapter has been divided into subchapters on the basis of the sub-questions posed at the beginning of this work and the research design chapter: how Breivik's acts are portrayed in the context of lone actor terrorism, whether the acts by Breivik are mainly seen as terrorism or as (mass) murder and how he and his deeds are contextualized. The latter concerns itself mostly with the category in which Breivik's attacks are placed and how the right wing ideology is being discussed. This latter subchapter goes into the insanity argument a bit more than the other two subchapters, although it is woven through all three discourses. I will link the statements to the mechanisms of expressing belief systems by Doty: presupposition, predication and subject positioning. Although I used the CDA approach by Jackson, working with two readings and first- and second-order critique (although not in as strict a fashion as he describes it), the end result is more fluid. It turned out that such a linear approach as Jackson describes, is not realistic in actual research.

### 4.1 Lone actor terrorism

In this subchapter I will discuss whether or not Breivik was seen as a lone actor and whether or not this had repercussions for how he is being portrayed. As it turns out, the journalists who wrote the articles which I discuss use a very strict definition of 'lone actor'. This becomes clear from the words that are being used to describe Breivik and his attacks and the array of cases which are used as a reference point for Breivik's attacks, predication and subject positioning. The results in the lone actor terrorism discourse differ immensely between newspapers and time frames. In the first phase, ranging from 22 July 2011 until 5 August 2011, a period of two weeks after the attacks, most references were made to lone actor terrorism. The latter two phases show little evidence of meaning-



making in terms of lone actor terrorism. All media showed some evidence of categorizing Breivik's attacks as lone actor terrorism. The discourse is very much related to the national discourse and through this linked to a range of attacks known in the respective countries. This chapter also shows examples of acts by which Breivik and Breivik's ideas are being discredited as a phenomenon of the mainstream school of thought on terrorism as categorized by Butko.

The Finnish, Dutch and American newspapers all published articles in which they compared the attacks to other attacks with a (perceived) similar nature, hereby framing through subject positioning. In Helsingin Sanomat the attacks are compared to different types of attacks, both by Muslims and people with other ideologies. The term 'terrorism' is used primarily for attacks by Muslims, however (Turtiainen & Peltomäki, 2011; Turtiainen, 2011). Lone-actor terrorism is not specifically mentioned as a separate type. Comparisons of attacks in Finland and Norway in other articles lead authors to conclude that the attacks by Breivik are not comparable to the school shootings Finland has experienced. They are considered to be of a whole different order. Even though Breivik acted alone, he is not considered to be part of the 'lone actor' category, which is related to teenage angst in this context of school shootings. The fact that Breivik had a political motive is decisive for this interpretation: he is not just someone who is isolated from society and sees his views confirmed on dark parts of the internet, but he specifically tried to sow fear and suspicion (HS, 2011e). De Volkskrant, on the other hand, compares the attack to mainly instances of lone actor terrorism but also mainly attacks involving Muslims (Volkskrant, 2011h). Again lone actor terrorism is not mentioned as a specific type of attack, but the subject positioning seems more logical and value-free. However, in all cases the amount of victims remains much lower nor do the attacks show similarities in terms of methods or grievances. It therefore appears to be so that what connects these attacks to those by Breivik is in fact the lone-actor aspect. In this article in de Volkskrant he is therefore placed within that tradition. The New York Times exhausted its database of home-grown, lone actors for their respective article. Breivik is mainly compared to right wing extremist Timothy McVeigh and Theodore Kaczynski, also in other articles (Shane, 2011; Erlanger & Shane, 2011a; Douthat, 2011a; Mackey, 2011a). In the New York Times both are considered to be lone actors. It seems that due to the more extensive experience of the US with home-grown, lone actor terrorism it is easier to place Breivik in this context. It seems as if the 'category had already been created', whereas in other countries it was the first of its kind to get this amount of attention and his place among others had not yet been negotiated.

In the European-based newspapers it appears as if terrorism and lone actor violence are mutually exclusive, which automatically denies the existence of lone actor terrorism. This becomes most clear from predication: the words which are connected to lone actor violence are not in any way related to terrorism, but rather to insanity and social isolation. But at the same time, presupposition is at play here, because the evaluation of the nature of lone actor terrorism is not always very explicit. Furthermore, it is argued that being a lone actor requires that the attacker reaches the conclusions on which they base their violence on their own, independently of others (Brussels, 2011). Because Breivik was inspired by others, Mark Townsend (Home Affairs Editor at the Guardian) and Ian Traynor (Europe Editor for the Guardian) argue he is not a lone actor. The fact that he developed his plans by himself and took the step to violence by himself does not seem to count in their deliberation (Brussels, 2011). Townsend again stated this in another article when writing: “The temptation to dismiss Breivik as a crazed, lone wolf should be cast aside, they argued, in favor of a closer examination of the counter-jihadist and far right network that influenced the killer” (Townsend, 2012a). Similar views are expressed by journalists Leen Vervaeke in *de Volkskrant* and Roger Cohen in the *New York Times* (Vervaeke, 2011b; Cohen, 2011).

The lone actor discourse in the Netherlands, United Kingdom and United States-based newspapers is focused mainly on insanity. It is built on the premise that lone actors must be crazy to come to the conclusions they draw from material from which most people draw completely different, peaceful conclusions. This premise is exemplified by statements by journalist Leen Vervaeke through claims that Breivik is a ‘*eenzame gek*’ (lonely madman) (Vervaeke, 2011b) and by Malou van Hintum when wondering: “Is Breivik een eenzame gek?” (Is Breivik a crazy lone actor?) (van Hintum, 2011a). It seems like the words ‘lone actor’ and ‘insane’ (or variations on these formulations) are linked to each other and rarely occur separately. In the *New York Times* this matter is being discussed at length by Nicholas Kulish, Roger Cohen, Jostein Gaarder and Thomas Hylland Eriksen. Nicholas Kulish, then Berlin Bureau Chief and thereby responsible for reporting about Central Europe ‘and beyond’, implied that Breivik’s lone acting was reason to suppose he is crazy (Kulish, 2011a). This supposes that Breivik was indeed a lone actor, who has been mad all his life, but who was stimulated into acting with extreme violence by the ‘atmosphere’ of the right wing milieu. This seems to combine the ideas that Breivik is insane with the idea that he is still a legitimate representative of far right thinking and politics and that his ideas have a relation to reality, which is a paradoxical statement. Reversely, Jostein Gaarder and Thomas Hylland Eriksen argue that not a single idea comes into existence through the thoughts of just one person: “No man is an island...every

man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main” (Gaarder & Eriksen, 2011). They stress that Breivik drew on a larger movement active on anti-Islamic and anti-immigration web sites in Norway and other parts of the world. They have no manifesto, but share a few fundamental views. The movement is made up of loosely connected individuals and can therefore not be called an organization (Gaarder & Eriksen, 2011). It was therefore quite likely that an attack by someone from the right wing movement would be a lone actor. However, this latter opinion is that of a minority.

Shortly after Breivik’s verdict had been made public, researcher Maria Paaso of the Finnish Security Service (Supo) evaluated Breivik’s liveness, sharing her beliefs through presupposition. She states that even though Breivik acted alone, he is not alone in his ideas. He may have been led astray because he led his life in a virtual reality in which the boundaries between fiction and reality blurred. Because of this he imagined to be supported by many people in both his cause and means and to be part of an imaginary organization (HS, 2011m). This reasoning makes it more believable that Breivik is indeed not a lone actor, because he himself did not believe him to be. During the court case he had claimed several times to be the commander of the Norwegian Resistance Movement or the Order of the Knights Templar (Pidd, 2012b). This line of reasoning is self-contradictory: if Breivik had indeed been insane and truly believed to be part of a larger movement, one could argue he is not a lone actor, because he would then have believed to be acting on behalf (and possibly on orders) of the larger movement. However, this argument is the exact opposite of the dominant discourse, in which his insanity is inherently linked to being a lone actor.

Breivik is considered a lone actor terrorist through subject positioning, but only in the more critical, evaluatory articles. Other articles assume that because he imagined himself to be part of a larger community or because he was actually part of that community (in the view of the author) because he shared their ideas, he was actually not a lone actor. This is also linked to him being called insane. According to some authors, he can only be a lone actor if he is insane. This seems to be illogical: if he is insane and truly believed to part of a(n imaginary) organization, this would rather argue in favor for him not being a lone actor.

There appears to be disagreement on the meaning of ‘lone actor’. In the Finnish media, it was mostly linked to school shooters and teenage angst. However, in the Dutch, British and American media a definition was used in which the attacker must have developed their ideas on their own, without any influence from other actors or groups. This is, especially in this day and age, a highly illogical definition. Globalization and the internet have as an effect that people can find information about almost any subject. Web 2.0 made the internet more participatory, which aids in the spreading of

propaganda (also in the form of ‘fake news’ or ‘alternative facts’). Add to that the filter bubble, algorithms used by social media and search engine Google, which make sure that people’s convictions are strengthened because they are confronted with materials that people with similar beliefs also see and like, and you get a situation in which it is very unlikely that a person has not been influenced by their surroundings.

It would then emerge that something like lone actors and ‘lone wolf terrorism’ are in fact non-existent. This is, however, not the case. What we can conclude is that the use of the term ‘lone actor’ (and all related terms) is ambiguous and differs from author to author. While it seems like a simple term to define, apparently there is no consensus on what it really means. This has implications for the types of attacks Breivik’s attacks are compared to and therefore in which context his acts are placed.

Furthermore, it seems that use of the term ‘lone actor’ is related, at least in the Dutch and Finnish media, to its organizedness. It is not necessarily linked to a certain ideology, but used mainly for erratic, small-scale attacks. Whenever the amount of people involved exceeded three persons the attack was more likely to be linked to terrorism. Due to the link made with madness and insanity, it is considered that a lone actor could not execute the amount of devastation which Breivik created. This caused him to not be portrayed as primarily a lone actor, although he acted alone. At the very least the occurrence of such a large-scale attack by a single person has started a discussion on the nature of lone actor terrorism. Its relationship to insanity, degrees of loneness and the role of imagined communities has to be evaluated and a first step has been made in the period after the attacks by Breivik as part of the meaning-making process. It turns out that the discussion is problematic both in academia and in journalism. The U.S. media, on the other hand, did refer to lone actor terrorist attacks which were in fact rather organized and thought-through and in some cases even repetitive, long-term attacks. For the U.K. media this was not a mentioned factor.

This conclusion on erraticness is interesting in the light of the binary nature of discussions around terrorism. When talking about (lone actor) terrorism, a strong ‘us versus them’-sentiment can be detected. They, the terrorists, are fanatics and irrational beings, whereas ‘we’ are rational and moderate. Matusitz argues that the stereotype of a lone, disturbed individual has been replaced by that of people who are involved in structures and political conflicts (2013, p. 117). As a result, the lone disturbed individual still exists, but only in the context of domestic terrorism. The domestic terrorist is intelligent, but mentally unstable, whereas the foreign terrorist is evil and an extremist, driven by hate towards the West which originates in Islamic radicalism (Powell, 2011). This tendency is also

very visible in many reports on the attacks by Breivik and can be seen as a part of the campaign to discredit the attacker as described by Butko (2009, p. 186).

## **4.2 Terrorism or (mass) murder?**

In this subchapter I will look at the framing of Breivik's attacks in terms of terrorism or (mass) murder. Is Breivik in the first place seen as a terrorist or as a (mass) murderer and therefore described in criminal terminology? How do newspapers evaluate Breivik's place among other attacks? What are the underlying assumptions concerning terrorism which do or do not apply to Breivik's attacks? Even though some people realize the assumptions underlying the use of terrorism-related terms are ready to be updated, in reality not much changed. The underlying assumption is still that terrorism is mostly executed by jihadists.

The discussions on whether or not Breivik's attacks were terrorism and the terms used to describe his acts are fraught with ambiguity. Many articles referred to Breivik and his acts with terrorism-related terms. However, whenever terrorism-related terms are used to describe Breivik and his attacks, this is usually done in the fringes of the discussion, not in titles or at the beginning of the articles. Breivik is in the first place seen as a shooter, (mass) killer, right wing extremist and more, but in the second place as a terrorist. This depends on the type of article and thereby the author as well, like in the previous subchapter. Eyewitness accounts and other factual reports tend to use more value-neutral terms, whereas columns, op-eds and other articles in which an author gets more room for expressing their opinions, use more value-laden terms. This process mostly functions through predication.

Journalists of all newspapers initially placed the attacks in the context of 9/11, Madrid and London in the process of subject positioning. This had to do with speculations by American researcher McCants in the New York Times that this was in fact an attack by a jihadist terrorist organization, based on information which could not otherwise be confirmed (Malmberg, 2011). The article used the terms 'terror attack' and 'terrorists' generously. It was assumed that the attack was the work of an organization with a violent, jihadist agenda (Aittokoski, 2011b). Later that day it became clear that the attacker was in fact Norwegian. The author of the article was Heikki Aittokoski, the head of the foreign news section at the time. He quickly responded with a correction to his earlier report, deconstructing the discourse on terrorism and placing his own interpretation in its place: "Veritekojen karmeutta ja uhrien tuskaa syyllisen henkilöys ei muuta miksiäkään. Terrorista on kyse yhtä kaikki" (The identity of the offender does not change the vileness of the murders nor the agony of the victims. It is all a question of terror) (Aittokoski, 2011a). Heikki Aittokoski explicitly places

himself in the category of authors who realize they should employ a more open view on reality and that journalism is filled with assumptions. Another example is the editorial by the Director of the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO): “[Breivikin] Hyökkäykset olivat silkkaa terrorismia. Niiden motiivi oli poliittinen ja uhrit siviilejä. Teoilla haluttiin luoda levottomuutta ja kärsimystä, jotka dramaattisten poliittisten vastatoimien kautta muuttaisivat norjalaista yhteiskuntaa.” (“The attacks [by Breivik] were pure terrorism. Their motive was political and the victims civilians. With the acts it was tried to create unrest and suffering, which would change Norwegian society via dramatical political counteracts.”) (HS, 2011o).

After the misattribution of the attacks several researchers and journalist asked for a re-evaluation of the use of the word terrorism: “Niihin löydettyjen iskua selittävien mahdollisuuksien yksipuolisuus kertoo surullisen paljon siitä, miten kapeasti terrorismi länsimaisissa mielissä Norjan tragediaan asti rakentui. Eniten median kapeakatseisuus suretti tietysti muslimeita.” (“The one-sidedness of the possibilities which explain the attack found in these [newspapers] tells us sadly much about how narrowly terrorism has been built in the Western minds until Norway’s tragedy. The narrow-mindedness of the media of course mostly saddened Muslims.”) (Malmberg, 2011). The process shows clearly how the interpretive process worked: something big happens, many people die and people get scared. Based on what has gained attention lately in the media, it is called a terrorist act and people start looking for explanations. Even the slightest hint of a possibility of attribution is found and published regardless of any possibility to check the information, hereby blaming it on the seemingly most logical actor, Muslims, making it a textbook example of cognitive bias.

Regardless of this realization that the discourse surrounding terrorism contains strong bias among many writers, presupposition and predication still continues, also in the top layers of politics. Terrorism-related terms tend to be linked to jihadist violence rather than any other form of political or ideological violence. The Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs Erkki Tuomioja was quick to condemn the attacks and relate it to other terror attacks. He also made people aware that Finland has been saved from these attacks by chance, not because of good policy. It could happen anywhere, even in the safest places in the world (as show the attacks in Norway, long considered the safest place on earth) (Väntönen, 2011a). Even though it had already been established that the attack had nothing to do with Islamic extremism and that it could happen anywhere, Tuomioja still feels the need to explain that the risk is smaller that the same would happen in Finland, because Finland’s involvement in international military operations is not as large as in Norway, even though Breivik’s motives showed no luck whatsoever to international military operations (Väntönen, 2011a). It was

one of the speculated reasons for the attacks when it was still thought to be an attack by Islamic extremists and this reasoning refers back to the involvement of Muslims.

The same can be said for Norway: even though Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs Støre warned not to draw too many conclusions before the investigations are done, he referred to similar attacks in other countries (implying they are jihadist attacks) as ‘acts of terror’, but to attacks by the far right as ‘political violence’, which is much more value-neutral. Here he also seems to suggest that attacks by jihadists qualify for the term ‘terrorism’, unlike attacks by others (Eronen, 2011a). Some more examples of this type can be found in Helsingin Sanomat. While the intention is conciliatory and a sign of solidarity towards Muslims, the process of predication itself has not yet changed: terrorism-related terms are still mainly used for attacks by Muslims. It is a phenomenon which is popping up in the interpretations by leaders as well as journalists and which can also be found in the Dutch media and in statements of Dutch and international authorities (Volkskrant, 2011e; Volkskrant, 2011ak). The minute-to-minute report of the development of the attacks shows this very clearly. Up until the moment that the Norwegian police announced the attacker is a Norwegian man, terrorism-related terms are used plentifully, after that they make room for terms as ‘bomaanslag’ (bomb attack), ‘schietpartij’ (mass shooting) and ‘politiek geweld’ (political violence) (Volkskrant, 2011i). These articles reflect that political violence, lone actor violence and right wing extremist violence do not qualify for the term ‘terrorism’ in the eyes of the authors of this article.

In an article published the day after the attacks the link between terrorism and Islam is made somewhat more explicitly: “De Noorse politie ziet geen verband met buitenlandse terroristen zoals jihadisten” (The Norwegian police sees no relationship to foreign terrorists such as jihadists) (Volkskrant, 2011u). The realization that this is a matter of lone actor terrorism seems to come slowly on the second day as well, when Breivik’s attack is placed in a longer list of shootings. Not much later reference is made to a ‘extremerechts terroristisch netwerk’ (far right terrorist network) is used, making it the first time the word ‘terrorist’ is used in the context of something other than Islamic violence in the reporting by de Volkskrant on this subject (Volkskrant, 2011as). Even so, it is used in the context of a network, a larger group, rather than in the context of what this attack was: an attack by a lone actor, which once again seems to suggest that lone actor violence does not seem to qualify for the term ‘terrorism’ in the eyes of journalists.

The Guardian uses terrorism-related terms in a more balanced way. Although also in the Guardian other terms are used to describe Breivik and his deeds, the Guardian was quick in calling his attacks a ‘terrorist act’ and stating that Breivik “had fundamentalist views, hated liberal politics, Muslims



and immigrants, and is believed to have well thought out and planned his attacks” (Doward, 2011). While in the title of the same article he is called a mass murderer, the article portrays him as someone with a purpose who had planned his attacks meticulously and over a long time. Already a day later he is called a ‘home-grown terrorist’ (McVeigh & Townsend, 2011). This article applies the term ‘terrorism’ indiscriminately, regardless of the ideological motivation of the actors executing the attack. Furthermore, while in the Netherlands and Finland there seemed to be no hurry to re-evaluate the counter-terrorism strategy, because it hadn’t happened in their country and there seemed to be no direct threat, then Home Secretary Theresa May was urged to do just that. The strategy at that point ruled out the possibility of far right terror attacks: “People involved in extreme rightwing terrorism have not received the same training, guidance or support as many of those who have engaged with al-Qaida or al-Qaida-influenced organizations. Nor have they ever aspired or planned to conduct operation on the scale of those planned by their al-Qaida counterparts” (Watt, Dodd & Taylor, 2011). The idea that terrorism was merely a phenomenon of Islamic extremists had taken a hold of both government and the police but was forced to be reviewed due to the new developments. This development shows that Breivik was also politically branded a terrorist, while the Netherlands and Finland approach him as they would any other criminal and as an anomaly. Considering the Norwegians hadn’t seen the attack coming, ignoring this happened and not updating your counter-terrorism strategy seems somewhat naive.

Starting 25 July, after the first hearing, terms related to terrorism are becoming more numerous (Volkskrant, 2011bd; Volkskrant, 2011bb; Volkskrant, 2011cj; Vervaeke, 2011a; Volkskrant, 2011bu; Volkskrant, 2011bp). This is when evaluatory articles start to be published and journalists start to give more explicit meaning to the attacks. However, terrorism-related terms are still not the main terms to describe Breivik and his acts. Nausicaa Marbe finds this phenomenon logical: if the attacker had been a foreigner, one could start a war against terrorism. However, he is a ‘terrorist from own soil’ (Marbe, 2011). Breivik has challenged our ideas of what terrorism is. A re-evaluation takes time, but a start has been made. It is a gradual change which is visible in the reports by de Volkskrant. In column-style reports in the second phase the verdict of columnists is leaning more towards terrorism than in the first phase.

The New York Times was responsible for spreading rumors that the attacks were executed by a branch of al-Qaeda. In doing so it showed signs of confirmation bias. The article in which the rumors were published was later edited, the expressions were weakened and balanced by suspicions that “Norway’s own homegrown extremists” might be responsible (Mala & Goodman, 2011). The



use of terms related to terrorism is still restricted to jihadist terrorists. Even though authors such as the before mentioned Kulish acknowledge that the threat of right wing extremism has not been taken seriously and that Western societies have focused too much on the threat from jihadists, they perpetuate the discourse which is a result of that focus through presupposition and predication (Kulish, 2011a; Erlanger & Shane, 2011a; Erlanger & Shane, 2011b; Shane, 2011).

Later in the after-attack phase the term terrorism was pushed even more to the background in Helsingin Sanomat, even though Breivik was convicted for terrorism (HS, 2012e; HS, 2012d). This is especially interesting since the judge said during the expression of the verdict (phase 3) that “hänen tavoitteenaan oli herättää pelkoa ja radikalisoita muslimien maahanmuuton vastustusta” (his goal was to incite fear and to radicalise the opposition to immigration of Muslims) (HS, 2012g). The goal of inciting fear is often mentioned in definitions of terrorism, also by those who claim on the basis of this definition that Breivik is not a terrorist. The article still makes no mention of terrorism. Also in most of these cases terrorism-related terms are used in (both direct and indirect) quotes by other people, such as Breivik himself. In those cases it is unsure whether the journalist themselves chose to use that word or whether it was merely copied from Breivik’s words. Also in the articles describing the verdict Helsingin Sanomat hardly uses terrorism-related terms, except when discussing that Breivik was found guilty of terrorism (HS, 2012g; Kauhanen, 2012d; HS, 2012j; HS, 2012l).

De Volkskrant however calls the attacks ‘terreurdaden’ (acts of terror) in articles about the verdict (Volkskrant, 2012p). The same goes for several consecutive articles (Volkskrant, 2012q; Volkskrant, 2012r). In two articles terrorism-related words are not being used at all, but rather words referring to (mass) murder (Volkskrant, 2012o; Volkskrant, 2012s). The results are again slightly mixed, but lean more towards a terrorism-related interpretation of Breivik’s acts than for example the Guardian, which seems to be led by the terrorism verdict.

During the verdict phase the articles in the Guardian use more criminal terminology than before. They have accepted Breivik as the “most high-profile criminal trial in Norway since Nazi collaborators were prosecuted following the second world war” (Townsend, 2012a). References to terrorism are made, but more on a general level or when speaking about the verdict, which treats him as a terrorist.

Throughout all after-attack phases the New York Times used the terrorism-related terms sparsely. Even though links are made to the methods by al-Qaeda and to the ideas and methods of Timothy

McVeigh, the Unabomber and 9/11 the most often-used terms to describe Breivik are 'Norwegian', 'militant', 'defendant', and mostly 'Mr. Breivik' (Lewis & Cowell, 2012a; Lewis & Cowell, 2012b). Furthermore, Breivik's sanity was the centerpiece of the discussions.

Regardless of calls to not be so focused on the jihadist threat and to not think that any ideology has a monopoly on terrorism, the British government refuses to officially brand the English Defense League (EDL), an right wing group from the UK with which Breivik had been in contact, an extremist group. This limits the capabilities of the police to monitor and gather intelligence on the EDL. The only organizations being monitored were, even after the attacks in Norway, Islamic organizations. A police officer even stated that: "the EDL was only an issue when it had a knock-on effect on Islamist extremist groups" (Watt, Dodd & Taylor, 2011). As Matthew Harwood argues, it is nearly impossible to see people who look like us and to some extent think like some of us, as terrorists or to bombard them with generalizations in terms of religion or race. In those cases he is not a terrorist, but a 'deranged shooter', 'extremist' or whichever other downgrade one can come up with that's not calling him a terrorist. They are then handled by the criminal justice system like any other criminal and effectively become an exception, an anomaly (Harwood, 2011). So while the Guardian shows some commonalities in terms of ambiguity in the use of the term 'terrorism' with *de Volkskrant*, the discussion takes on new, more explicit forms than the other newspapers at an earlier stage after the attacks in the direction of crime framing.

Especially in the UK and the US far right views are given a fair amount of space to profess their discourse on terrorism. On the same day that the article by Harwood was published an article by Simon Jenkins, a journalist specializing in terrorism and British politics, was published in the Guardian. Jenkins argues that we shouldn't attribute too much meaning to the attacks by Breivik and that Breivik is deranged: "That he does something terrible does not make him a terrorist" (Jenkins, 2011). He argues we shouldn't read too much into the manifesto, but does not consider the fact that the manifesto is exactly what gives the attacks meaning and show us what Breivik's goals were. This argument can also be found in other expressions in a more implicit way. Another article mentions the off-the-record statement of an anonymous police official who states that "It seems it's not Islamic-terror related. This seems like a madman's work." (Beaumont, 2011b). This statement seems to suggest one excludes the other and does not take into regard that right wing extremism is an ideology on which one can decide to act violently, just like Islam. The reasoning by Jenkins rests on the idea that sane people cannot do bad things and stigmatizes the clinically insane.

All newspapers also show renewed interest for the 'links' between jihadism and Breivik, although

superficial. Especially the English-language media were preoccupied with this view, although also in de Volkskrant this opinion is expressed. Pieter Hilhorst, for example, argues that in his hate of Islam Breivik preaches a return to the Dark Ages, the times of religious wars, similarly to al-Qaeda (Hilhorst, 2011). Taking this even further, the Guardian claims Breivik likes to create a picture of himself of a religious terrorist who, because he believes in the afterlife, is not afraid to die. Even though he hates Islam, he at several points declared himself to have been inspired by or feel a connection to al-Qaeda (Pidd, 2012e; Pidd, 2012g). He criticizes militant nationalists and especially “keyboard warriors” on this point, because they are not able to die for their cause. This, he states, causes them to “face serious problems” (Pidd, 2012g). At many other points his commonalities with al-Qaeda’s motives and methods are underlined as well (The New York Times, 2012; Cowell, 2012, van Bommel, 2011a).

In the phase during which the verdict is being published the amount of attention from the New York Times for the case has greatly subdued. Only one article has been published about Breivik’s attacks in the chosen timeframe. The term terrorism is not used even once, even though Breivik was found guilty of terrorism. The article follows the way in which Breivik has been treated by the legal system: as any other criminal. The article expresses bewilderment at this treatment and the fact that victims and their relatives were relieved about the results of the court case. The focus is on accountability and prevalence of the principle of the rule of law, regardless of the gravity of his acts (Lewis & Lyall, 2012). This in general has led to much bewilderment and a large discussion about the trade-off between preventing Breivik from spreading his ideology and upholding the principles of the rule of law. Also in the media this difference between the Norwegian and U.S. approach has been noted, which makes the difference explicit and raises likely even more questions among Americans: “U.S. authorities have declared there are limits to the open society, that the rule of law is not strong enough to cope with every eventuality” (Cowell, 2012).

The attacks by Breivik have led to a reconsideration of the meaning we give to the attacks, but the deeper discourse is still lagging behind. On the surface it appears that the discourse has changed, but the underlying assumptions are still there: terrorism-related terms are used mainly for jihadist violence and terms related to criminal behavior for violence executed in the name of other ideologies. More definite results could be obtained from a comparative analysis of Breivik’s attacks with a typical terrorist attack in order to see the differences more clearly. Some authors realize that terrorism has been linked too much to words such as ‘Islamic’, ‘jihadists’ and ‘Muslims’. Most authors and people who are quoted do however still use the term mostly in that context. This has led many

to turn this logic around: if terrorism is related to Muslims, then if something which looks like terrorism happens, Muslims must be guilty. This approach led to a certain blindness which has as its result that people can no longer consider other options than Muslims committing acts of terrible violence, while in fact it could be anyone's doing. This effect was strongest in the New York Times, but the other newspapers freely copied the assumptions ventilated in the first.

This chapter shows further support for Maurits van der Veen's organized Islamist terrorism frame. The first characteristic is that the term 'terrorism' is mainly reserved for attacks by Muslims or ones which yield enough victims. Breivik's attacks appear to be just on the border and up for discussion for that reason. The most balanced use of terrorism-related terms was found in the Guardian, but all newspapers showed some degree of ambiguity in framing of Breivik's attacks. Secondly, even if the attacks had been categorized as terrorism, the focus in the discourse surrounding it will still be on Islamic violence. Also this phenomenon has been shown to be a factor in the discourse surrounding Breivik's attacks, although mostly in the English-language media. Thirdly, lessons from violent acts focus only on those which are framed as terrorism. Policy therefore takes into account only those attacks which are generally considered terrorism, which is, as we know, mainly jihadist terrorism. This was not the focus of this chapter, but the articles have shown that indeed little to no attention has been paid to these attacks in terms of policy. If any changes were made, they did not have any real-life effects, because the authorities were not convinced enough of the threat posed by the far right. The main example of this is the change in UK's counter-terrorism legislation. While legislation was changed, practice in fact didn't change, because authorities refused to mark any extreme-right organization as a terrorism organization, which makes surveillance and other counter-terrorism measures impossible. So not just the discourse is lagging behind, practice is too. Furthermore, the division lines between left and right are very clear in the UK and the US in the discourse on whether or not Breivik is in fact a terrorist or a (mass) murderer. This has to do with the ongoing power struggle: Breivik has the potential to take down right wing politics and its rhetorics and therefore poses a threat to the electoral support to the right wing.

### **4.3 Political context**

In this chapter the portrayal of the attacks by Breivik is discussed from the perspective of the political context. It goes deeper into the aspect of which political branch Breivik is said to belong to: is he a right wing extremist? Or should he rather be described in terms of religious ideology? It goes into the paradoxical attempt at removal of ties to the far right by right wing politicians and the way in which the news media try to cope with Breivik's Norwegianness.

Several days after the attacks Roger Cohen tries to predict how right wing thinkers will portray Breivik: “Breivik [...] is just a particularly murderous psychotic loner: the 32-year-old mama’s boy with no contact with his father, obsessed by video games [...] as he preens himself [...] and dedicates his time in asexual isolation to the cultivation of hatred and the assembly of a bomb from crushed aspirin and fertilizer” (Cohen, 2011). The right wing tends to claim that all Muslims should denounce the people who deformed their religion in the name of murder after a terrorist attack has happened. However, at the same time the right wing, Cohen expects, will put Breivik away as an anomaly, thereby not denouncing his ideas (Cohen, 2011). They then cut the cord between Breivik and the right wing, as if they are completely unrelated. Cohen’s suspicions became truth.

This is the main subject of this subchapter: how is Breivik received by the far right? The far right demands of Muslims that they denounce people of the same faith who execute gruesome attacks. However, at the same time they have a hard time accepting that also their ideology can be abused for violent attacks. They use several tactics in an attempt to remove the link between Breivik and their ideas, the main tactic being subject positioning. At the end of this chapter I discuss the reception of the attacker’s ‘Norwegianness’, which got a different interpretation in the European and American media.

Many authors are openly discrediting Breivik, if the nature of the article allows them to do so. It has to do with the idea of ‘ingroup-outgroup differentiation, which can be considered a form of subject positioning. Cas Mudde argues in *de Volkskrant* that it is only natural that terrorist acts like these become the victim of political opportunism and blame games. In this discourse, ‘we’ are heterogeneous and individually responsible, whereas ‘they’ are homogenous and collectively responsible. This phenomenon is very human and is called ingroup-outgroup differentiation. While it is often ascribed to the far right, it is in fact human and present in all processes of group thinking. However, the basis of our society is individual responsibility and therefore people should be judged fairly, on the basis of their individual acts. Collective responsibility is only a moral concept and even then only in terms of matters of conscience. One person cannot be held responsible for what another member of their (imagined) community does or says (Mudde, 2011). Calling the attacker insane and pathetic in the media is one way of turning someone from the in-group into someone from the out-

group by showing that he ‘is not like us’. This is one of the reasons authors go into Breivik’s background: to point out disturbing details about him, to create an image of him that is unfavorable so that people will not try to link his ideas to those of sane mind. The discussion of whether or not Breivik is insane has relevance for both the terrorist or mass murderer discourse as for this one, although the relevance to the argument of this discourse is much greater. Therefore I go more into depth into the subject in this subchapter than in the previous.

Even though it is easier to blame large attacks on an outsider, it is far more likely for an attacker to be coming from close to you, literally and culturally. In the article ‘The Terror From Within’ Russell Jacobs argues that most threats and violence emerge from within a society, not from without, as many far right writers tend to argue. The idea that foreigners are the source of a threat is, however, far more reassuring. It is easier to protect yourself against a threat from outside than from a threat from the inside. That is why when little information is available it is assumed that the culprit is a foreigner. Jacobs argues that the attacker is often someone close who poses the threat due to proximity. Proximity gives more reasons to get annoyed by someone. “A neighbor’s barking dog or loud music elicits more anger than the imagined threat of an unseen stranger” (Jacoby, 2011). Also the smaller difference in cultural background leads to more friction, because they imperil identity and challenge us. In this way he is made ‘one of us’, which makes it all the more scary due to the processes described above. From this we can conclude that by creating a distance between yourself and the attacker by denying the similarities one tries to deny the scary fact that you are really quite similar in cultural terms. Others, mostly intellectuals and left wing thinkers, were more comfortable acknowledging Breivik’s place in society and right wing thinking. However, since there has already been a strong divide between left and right wing politics in most of Europe, an ‘us’ and ‘them’ had already been created and in fact ingroup-outgroup differentiation was still taking place.

Discrediting Breivik can be seen as a tactic to put the citizens’ minds at ease: although it was motivated and thought through, his thoughts make no sense and this man had serious issues. He is disturbed, his deeds were irrational and his killing indiscriminate. They remove the relevance of his ideas to reality and state that he could have used whichever ideology, that would not have changed his willingness to kill. It is both a comforting and unsettling idea: it is an exceptional event and not

likely to happen again soon. On the other hand, if ideology does not matter to the acts, anyone could be a target and it could be repeated anywhere at any time. It also removes the relevance of the amount of planning and thought that went into the attacks and the motives behind them and is a clear sign of the mainstream position on terrorism as described by Butko (2009, p. 186).

In the article 'Äärioikeistolainen terroristi Oslostä' ('Extreme-right terrorist from Oslo') the author Minna Passi does not hide her convictions of Breivik (2011). She goes into his personal background in order to show her readers the pathetic details: he claimed to be a millionaire and a director who had earned his first million as a 24-year old. In reality he lived with his mother for the largest part of his life and seemed to only have had a business in agriculture in order to get the necessary materials for creating his bomb. He saw himself as a smarter social thinker than others. This article clearly brands him as a terrorist, but also seems to suggest he was delusional and narcissistic (Passi, 2011). The tactics in this type of reasoning are presupposition, because people presuppose that their readers will also come to the conclusion that Breivik is pathetic and insane on the basis of their description of his personal life, and predication, because in many cases specific, negative words are used to describe Breivik which create this image of him.

Breivik is not just made to look pathetic, but also insane. This discussion is at the center of the court case. The main argument in favour of Breivik's sanity is made in similar terms to which Kristian Berg Harpviken, the Director at the Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO), used in his article 'Norjalla on edessään pitkä toipuminen': that the opinions expressed by Breivik in his manifest were logical and coherent, although extreme (HS, 2011o). With this he is placed clearly within the far right tradition, making the differentiation that Breivik is even in these circles extreme, because most would not consider using violence to act on their ideas. This idea takes Breivik seriously as a person and it makes it possible for others to come to the same conclusion on the basis of far-right ideas.

The main argument against Breivik's sanity is exemplified by the editorial in Helsingin Sanomat. In this the editor-in-chief states outright that Breivik has a sick mind: "Kyse on sairaan mielen rakennelmista, jotka eivät millään tavalla selitä murhia. Jos Breivik ei olisi valinnut äärioikeistoa ja kristinuskkoa, hän olisi todennäköisesti löytänyt tilalle jotain muuta. Hän halusi tappaa." (about Brei-



vik's manifest: "It is a matter of the constructs of a sick mind, which don't explain the murders in any way. If Breivik hadn't chosen the far right and Christianity, he would probably have found something else instead. He wanted to kill." (HS, 2011i). They argue that Breivik doesn't need an ideology, but will come up with anything to justify his urges to kill. Another oft-heard argument is that a sane person could not do such a thing, which was also already mentioned previously in this thesis..

The Guardian portrays Breivik as a "pathetic and mean loser without integrity" (Pidd, 2012e). The article continues by dismantling his arguments for the attack: "The persona that emerged during day two of Breivik's 10-week trial was a rambling, repetitive obsessive, fixated on a threat he never truly managed to articulate, but which involved "cultural Marxists", whom he claimed had destroyed Norway by using it as "a dumping ground for the surplus births of the third world" (Pidd, 2012e). In another article journalists of the Guardian checked the facts behind Breivik's claims in court (Davies, 2012). This type of critiquing of an ideology is rarer with other types of terrorism, but when the ideas originate from closer to home and are not uncommon in a society it is more likely opponents of the ideas feel the need to take it seriously and to counter the ideas with rational arguments.

The insanity discourse is most convenient to the far right, especially in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Breivik mentioned Geert Wilders (Dutch parliamentarian of the PVV or 'Freedom Party') and several right wing thinkers from the United Kingdom in his manifesto as sources of inspiration, building upon their thoughts to create his own ideology. This was especially apparent due to Breivik's thorough referencing. This once again ripped open the division between left and right (Bakker & Hoedeman, 2011). Wilders was accused of hypocrisy and asked to take a more dismissive stance towards Breivik's ideas. The left on the other hand was accused of abusing the attacks for political gain (du Pré, 2011b). This tendency is also visible in the Guardian, where the left calls Breivik sane and rational, but with an extreme ideology and even more extreme measures, whereas the right distances itself from Breivik by calling him insane. The far right doesn't just receive a setback through the attacks, but is hit in the face with their own statements against Muslims: "the same neoconservative zealots who have always insisted that non-violent (Muslim) "extremists" must be



cast out because they legitimized and provided a “conveyor belt to terrorism” have now been hoist by their own petard” (Milne, 2011).

The statements of the American right wing journalist from Fox News and anchor of ‘The O’Reilly Factor’ Bill O’Reilly are exemplary of the even larger rift between the left and right in the United States as compared to Europe. In the article with the title “As Horrors Emerged Norway Charged Christian Extremist” Bill O’Reilly claimed that “no one believing in Jesus commits mass murder” (Walshe, 2011). He believes that the New York Times uses this angle in order to further their own agenda, even though it was the Norwegian police which called Breivik a Christian extremist. According to O’Reilly the leftist media wants to create a Christian equivalent of jihadist terrorism. He places himself in the apparent dichotomy of left and right by calling Breivik nuts and implying that what he did is nothing like state sponsored or jihadist terrorism. Also he claims that the media doesn’t like Christians for being too judgmental on many issues (abortion, gay marriage, legalized narcotics, which are all leftist causes) (Walshe, 2011). Regardless of Breivik referring to starting a “Christian war to defend Europa against the threat of Muslim domination” (Walshe, 2011). O’Reilly claims that it couldn’t have been his religion which drove him to kill, but the Muslims intrusion into Norway. A clearer example of the hypocrisy from the far-right could not be provided.

Similarly Fox News anchor Glenn Beck somehow tries to turn the attacks into one by “big government” politicians by providing his listeners with an explanation of how politics is inherently different in Europe. Although he acknowledged that Breivik was a right wing extremist, he tried to frame it as such that it seems like the left was in the end responsible and the victims were actually Nazis (Walshe, 2011). The American far right goes to great lengths in order to make sure they are not implicated in these attacks and the Guardian willingly provides them with a forum.

The American anti-Islam blogger Pamela Geller responds in a similar fashion. When it first was speculated that the attacks were executed by Muslims, she posted: “You can ignore jihad, but you cannot avoid the consequences of ignoring jihad.” (Garton Ash, 2011). However, when the perpetrator turned out to be Norwegian, she commented: “He’s a bloody murderer. Period. He is responsible for his actions. He and only he. There was no ‘ideology’ here” (Garton Ash, 2011). Bruce Bawer

said it was impossible to connect Breivik's ideas to his deeds and Spencer stated that "Freedom fighters should not be tarred with this brush" (Garton Ash, 2011). It appears that the expression "One man's freedom fighter is another one man's terrorist" has not yet penetrated into these branches of the far right, but this is a textbook example of the expression. Arguments of this class have not been found in the European news coverage.

The far right goes through a similar period of accusation and collective responsibility as Muslims tend to experience after an attack by someone of the same religion. They are called upon to take responsibility for their words, which incited someone to violence (du Pré, 2011a). Likewise does Nausicaa Marbe argue that words matter, but that we should not hijack these attacks in order to further our own political agenda. Let's not make more of Wilders' words than what they really are: an inspiration, but not the source of the problem. However, we should not deny the connection between Breivik's extremism and the broader right wing movement (Marbe, 2011; Douthat, 2011a; Douthat, 2011b).

The fact that Breivik is Norwegian and not a Muslim leads to different reactions on either side of the ocean. In Helsingin Sanomat it is seen as something positive, since it will avoid a rift being created and rather brings people closer in mourning and sympathy. The Norwegian citizens are all the target, regardless of (religious) background: "Norjan - ja muiden Pohjoismaiden - yhteiskunta- rauhan kannalta ääri-islamilainen isku olisi vielä astetta hirvittävämpi" ("From the perspective of Norway's - and the other Nordic countries' - societal peace an Islamic extremist attack would have been even one degree more more terrible") (Aittokoski, 2011a). Also a bystander was quoted to have said this was easier to accept, because an attack by al-Qaeda would have split the city up (Eronen, 2011a). In the Guardian this stance is made more explicit. One newspaper report speaks about the suffering of the small Arctic town Bardu, which lost two of its few youths. Deputy mayor of the town, Arne Nysted, says it was fortunate that the attacker was Norwegian: "If it had been al-Qaeda or a Muslim terrorist cell outside Norway we would have had a bad discussion about the sort of policies we should introduce. It would have been bad for our society. At least this way we are all together [...] all saying: 'We are meeting hatred with love.' No one is speaking of revenge." (Pidd, 2011d). Nysted in this way explicitly refers to the different reactions to terrorist attacks executed by

the in- or outgroup: in case of an out-group, the first reaction is to come up with new policies to keep those malicious outsiders out and to protect themselves from these outsiders. In case of an attack by a member of the in-group, this is not possible and therefore people have to deal with that person and their ideas within society. Unfortunately reports which stress unity in this way are in the minority and most focus on the left-right divide which is growing wider every day. Conversely, an often repeated statement in the New York Times is that it is harder for Norwegians to accept these attacks, because they were carried out by one of them. They had no scapegoat for the attacks and no way to distance themselves from 'them', because he was part of the 'us' which was also the target (Erlanger & Shane, 2011a; Erlanger & Shane, 2011b). This is surprising, since the European-based newspapers stress the exact opposite argument.

It is interesting to see that so many authors focus on Breivik's (in)sanity and personality. One wonders whether the same would have been done if the attacker had been a Muslim, or that it would have been blamed on their religion. When a Muslim executes an attack the far right is quick to blame it on their religion. The far right does not do what they ask of Muslims in the case of Breivik: his deeds are not being blamed on the 'violent nature of his ideology' or anything of the sort. Even though the approach to his attacks are ambiguous, this is a clear inequality present in all reporting on the attacks by Breivik. It is problematic since it warrants a different reply to different actors in similar cases. It is clear where the division in positions towards Breivik lies: there were the (political) gains meet. Those who benefit from discrediting the far right will claim he does represent far right ideology. Those who represent far right ideas will not want their movement smeared by a violent attack on children and they will therefore claim Breivik is insane and has nothing to do with them and their ideas. It furthermore implies that the West upholds a double standard in the way it talks about terrorism. An in-depth comparison of the portrayal of Breivik's attacks and those by jihadists is outside of the scope of this thesis, but hopefully this provides an incentive for further research.

Interestingly, most victims and next of kin felt Breivik had received the right verdict, even though it was one which Breivik preferred. Breivik himself wanted to be taken seriously in order for his ideas to spread. The victims were mostly relieved he was being held accountable for his actions. They saw it as a fair punishment, allowing the country to move on from the attacks (Lewis & Lyall,

2012). Especially in the New York Times shock is expressed at this approach. It explains that Norway treats him like they would any other criminal, whereas the American approach is much harder, denying the accused their rights. This is closely related to the fashion in which the court case was conducted. In Norway court proceedings are usually open and anyone can attend. There was therefore discussion about whether or not that should be allowed also in this case. Many feared that this would be merely another stage for Breivik to display his ideology and try to convince people that his acts were necessary, as he called it, using the trial as a propaganda tool. The trial therefore was already for a large part being dominated by the political ideology of Breivik's acts (Huusko, 2011c). In the New York Times a comparison was being made with the treatment of terrorists who were being sentenced in secret in the infamous Guantánamo Bay prison (Cowell, 2012).

Aslak Sira Myhre argues likewise in her editorial: "If Breivik had been from Afghanistan, Iraq or Nigeria, we would have asked what it was within these countries and cultures that made him a terrorist. But during this trial, too few have asked about whether there is anything within Norway and its white upper class that produced Breivik" (Myhre, 2012b). By discussing Breivik's persona and attacks in terms of psychological or psychiatric pathology the case has been medicalized and thereby depoliticized (or at least a start has been made). All of a sudden the far-right had become an expert of psychology and was equipped to make a proper assessment of his mental abilities.

Some have tried to show that Breivik is wrong and his ideas are based on wrongful assumptions and just plain lies from the far-right. However, showing that someone is wrong does not change the fact that Breivik has those ideas and that there are more people with similar ideas. It denies the idea of different opinions and different types of arguments, which is dangerous to the public debate. Those people are out there, the question is rather when they will act on their ideas. This is also relevant for the more recent debate on fake news.

Generally speaking it has been accepted that Breivik is a right wing extremist and that his acts were founded upon ideology which he based on ideas from the whole spectrum of right wing supporters, from mild to extreme. Breivik, however, took the ideas further and connected violent acts to them. Just like there are right wing supporters with different levels of extreme thoughts and actions so are there Muslims with different ranges of radical ideas and actions. Since 9/11 and surrounding terrorist attacks, there is a serious crackdown on conservative Muslims noticeable in different areas of

government policy. According to this logic, there should have been a crackdown on (far) right thinkers as well, since they influenced Breivik. Nothing like this happened, however, showing that there is indeed a certain bias towards treating the out-group differently. Some symbolic actions had been taken, as was shown in the previous subchapter, such as reformulating the Counter-Terrorism Strategy. This had no real impact on the far-right, however, whereas Muslims feel like they are the subject of constant scrutiny.

It is clear that the discourse in the United States, especially in terms of comments from the far-right takes on different proportions than the discourse in the Europe-based newspapers I analyzed. In both cases the far right tries to make sure they are not implied in the attacks, with accompanying accusations towards the left. While the arguments in the New York times are more extreme also more space is granted to those who want to argue that Breivik is insane, does not represent right wing thinking and politics and that the political left wing is abusing it for their own arguments. It seems unlikely that in European newspapers an argument like that of Bill O'Reilly (stating that the left wing media are trying to create a Christian form of jihadism in order to blame terrorist acts on religion) would be published, but several similar opinions were published in the New York Times. Furthermore, the New York Times had a whole different explanation and interpretation of whether or not Norwegians were relieved that Breivik was himself Norwegian. They argued that it was in fact a bad thing that Breivik is Norwegian and it would have been better to have a foreign attacker so people could blame someone. These factors paints a picture of a far more divisive political culture with a much deeper rift between left and right wing politics in the United States than in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Finland.

## 5. Conclusion

The results of this research are ambiguous. Breivik is referred to in many different ways, such as through predication with the terms ‘madman’, ‘shooter’, ‘(mass) killer’, ‘monster’ and at times ‘terrorist’. The discourses have many aspects which are often interlinked. Rarely was Breivik called a ‘lone actor’ or ‘lone wolf’. His attacks are compared to a large range of different attacks, some of which are clearly lone actor attacks, other jihadist attacks. Terrorism and lone actor violence are positioned, through subject positioning and supposition, as terms which are mutually exclusive, in which terrorism is a term reserved for attacks which are characterized by their organizedness and lone actor violence for its erratic nature and executed by an insane actor. Because Breivik had planned his attacks in great detail and had spent a great deal of time on it, he was thus not awarded the title ‘lone actor’. These results do however show that the hypothesis that non-Muslim lone actors are less likely to be called terrorists.

The data shows that many journalists have an unrealistic image of what a lone actor is. The discussion surrounding lone actor terrorism is closely intertwined with the discussion about insanity. It is supposed that a sane person cannot execute a violent attack without being assigned the task to do so by another person. Furthermore, it is assumed that a person cannot be a lone actor if their ideas have been influenced by other people, regardless of whether or not they in fact acted alone. This does have some basis in discourse, since many well-known instances of lone actor violence had to do with someone snapping or acting on the basis of emotions rather than a well-formulated political ideology. This discourse was much more obvious in the European newspapers than in the New York Times, which can most likely be ascribed to the large amount of experience with lone actor, home-grown terrorism in the United States.

Through this discovery we add to the observations by Spaaij & Hamm (2015) in which they state that ‘lone actor’ and ‘lone wolf’ are contested terms. As a construct of the media and politics, it is seen to mean someone who is in fact affiliated to a larger organization (Spaaij & Hamm, 2015, p. 168 - 169). Furthermore, they mention that it is seen as a form of violence meant to serve the actor’s personal or financial gain’ (Spaaij & Hamm, 2015, p. 169). The results of this research show a variation to this reasoning: actors acting on behalf of a larger ideology are not generally considered lone actors in the media involved in this research. Lone actors are seen as actors who act on the basis of their unique ideas. The fact that Breivik based his acts on ideas which are shared by others is enough reason to not consider him a lone actor. This appears to be impossible in the day and age whe-

re people are able to share their thoughts at any moment and where people are shown the opinions which tend to be in accordance with their own.

Meaning-making in terms of terrorism started already while the attacks were still on-going. While it was speculated that the attacker was a Muslim, all media called him a terrorist through the method of predication. This changed when it was found out that the killer was in fact Norwegian. After this the terrorism-related terms tended to be used to describe Breivik only in the fringes of the discussion in the newspapers, mostly using value-neutral terms, depending on the type of article.

A re-evaluation of what terrorism is was called for in all newspapers included in this research, even though the processes of presupposition and, to a lesser degree, predication continued to exert their force. In a part of the data a shift in discourse could be seen, giving more attention to the potential of other ideological terrorism than just jihadist terrorism. However, for the largest part the underlying assumptions surrounding terrorism remained unchanged and the re-evaluation remained for the largest part superficial. This became clear amongst others from the terms used to describe jihadist and far right violence: the former is more often referred to as terrorism, whereas more value-neutral terms are used for the latter. The same goes for actions undertaken to tackle right wing terrorism: the intention is there, but in reality nothing changed. This became most clear in the period during which the verdict was made public: even though Breivik was convicted for terrorism, few news articles resorted to terrorism-related terms. Rather the opposite, they focused more on the criminal aspects of the events due to the approach taken by the court. It can therefore be said that the frame is no longer considered to be as applicable as before the attacks by Breivik, because the frame no longer corresponds to the audience's 'frame in thought' (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p. 110).

Also the discourse on right wing violence is fraught with ambiguity and closely intertwined with the insanity discourse. A part of the news articles treated Breivik like a representative of the far right movement, whereas others did their best to discredit Breivik's persona and ideology, placing themselves in the mainstream in terms of their approach to terrorism as described by Butko (2009, p. 186). The former group consisted mainly of left wing thinkers who claimed that he based himself on the far right ideology but took his conclusions farther than many far right group would accept. The latter group was the prominent one and mainly consisted of right wing thinkers, such as politicians, columnists and writers. By calling him insane and focusing on his history they tried to remove the link between Breivik's attacks and themselves. This is very remarkable, since the far right requires of Muslims to feel responsible for and denounce attacks by other Muslims to which they have no relationship at all. In the United States this tendency is far greater than in Europe. Several

well-known far right thinkers spoke out in much stronger terms than the European right did at any point. Some even tried to blame it on the Norwegian government or on Muslims.

It leads one to wonder whether the same considerations would have been made if the attacker had in fact been a Muslim. It also actively stigmatizes the clinically insane and presupposes that sane people cannot do bad things. Furthermore, the large focus on Breivik's far-right ideology stands out in this respect. Sallamaa's study of terrorist attacks with different ideological backgrounds in only Finnish media provides a similar impression of the assumptions surrounding terrorism (Sallamaa, 2014, p. 88 - 89).

It is fascinating to see how the role of Breivik's attacks is being evaluated in the media, especially in times during which terrorism takes a central position in Western society. Whereas before Breivik's attacks the focus in counterterrorism policy, news reports about terrorism and terrorism studies was mostly on jihadist terrorism this idea is actively being challenged after the attacks. The political gain is not in all three discourses as apparent, but especially in case of the third research question on reception by the far right one can clearly distinguish the potential political gains from framing Breivik in one or another way. The fourth, 'sub-discourse' of insanity is embedded in all discourses and very clearly shows the benefits for different political sides. In the two other cases it seems rather like the different frames are defined by cultural values, which are determined by previous discourse. Also this discourse is very much dependent on political alignment. This makes it hard to imagine any other option than the one which bases itself on the underlying assumptions embedded in the discourse. This takes time to change, but the discussion was started and the dominant discourse challenged. Even though this did not have a complete turn as an effect, it provided the small push that was needed to set change in motion, making the discourse somewhat more fair. It remains to be seen, however, whether his attacks have had a long-lasting effect on discourse.

This research shows very clearly there is not one truth: it depends on who you talk to. Interpretations differ widely. The expressions of these interpretations, especially those in the media, play an important role when formulating policy options in order to mitigate violent attacks such as those by Breivik. There are several aspects to the framing of Breivik's attacks, but what seems clear is that regardless of ideological background, thorough and long-term preparation for the attacks and mental sanity no consensus can be reached on the nature of the attacks. Many other examples can be thought of where finding a consensus was not as complicated. Comparative research should show the more exact differences, but that is outside the scope of this research. At least this has hopefully provided food for thought and inspiration for new research with a social constructivist approach.



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