

## **INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME 17: THEORY TO PRACTICE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In this special edition of the *Journal of Security, Intelligence, and Resilience Education*, scholars from American colleges and universities explore the relationship between theory and practice in homeland security, intelligence, law enforcement, emergency management, and public health. The edition features the guided perspectives of eleven contributors who delve into singular and multi-theoretical frameworks and an atheoretical approach to research and practice. This introductory issue provides a brief overview of the articles that cover critical issues, including complex adaptive systems, crisis management, disaster preparedness, experiential learning, homeland security, international relations, intersectionality, natural disasters, organizational culture, public health threats, vulnerable populations, terrorism, and translational research.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The *Journal of Security, Intelligence, and Resilience Education* proudly presents its Special Edition, Theory to Practice. Theories are systematic and evidence-based approaches to processes and phenomena. They help us understand, describe, characterize, and predict outcomes. Theories help us understand processes, phenomena, and life in general. The goal is to improve the human condition. Theory to Practice is a compendium of homeland security, intelligence, law enforcement, emergency management, and public health theory, policy, and practice. The Special Edition focuses on the most recent innovations in the Science of Teaching and Learning, emphasizing developing and applying theory. Topical issues include active learning, aviation security, biosecurity, complex adaptive systems, crisis management, international relations, intersectionality and emergency management, mass shootings, terrorism, translational research, and vulnerable populations.

Theory to Practice was made possible by the hard work of three Special Editors, Drs. Shirley Feldman-Jensen, Lowell Dimoff, and Keith Cozine. The *Journal of Security, Intelligence, and Resilience Education* is indebted to them for the countless they spent editing this Volume.

### **NO. 2 A COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEMS THEORY OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

Retired Naval Post Graduate Professor Ted Lewis offers a unique perspective on homeland security by proposing the application of the theory of complex adaptive systems (CAS). The homeland security field comprises various knowledge domains characterized by their multidisciplinary nature. CAS aligns with the diverse and unpredictable elements within the homeland security enterprise. Lewis identifies six causal factors of CAS drivers in a complex

environment: the tragedy of the commons, the paradox of enrichment and redundancy, competitive exclusion, exponential contagion, and co-evolution. The CAS theory must be actionable in preventing, deterring, and responding to natural and human-caused events resulting from organizational failure, natural incidents, or perpetrated attacks. Lewis outlines practical strategies derived from the CAS, recognizing the limitations of evolving threats, the importance of resilience over efficiency, and utilizing network effects to strengthen homeland security. The strategies address systemic vulnerabilities and improve the resilience of the homeland security enterprise.

### **NO. 3 FROM PRACTICE TO THEORY**

Naval Post Graduate Professor Christopher Bellavita argues that homeland security transcends disciplinary boundaries. Given the intricacies of the social system, academics, practitioners, and students are encouraged to develop their own theories, applications, and strategies to adapt to changes in the field. Bellavita found that the process of generating theories demands increased cognitive effort and intellectual skepticism, which, in turn, draws upon a variety of frameworks. He advocates for a balance between theoretical coherence and the practical challenges of real-world, complex environments, emphasizing the importance of demonstrating adaptability.

### **NO. 4 THEORETICAL PATHWAYS TO TERRORISM, CRIME, AND MASS SHOOTINGS**

Monmouth University Professor John Comiskey advocates a multi-theoretical approach to problem-solving and research that surpasses single-theory outcomes. His *Theory for Homeland Security* undergraduate course exemplifies a multi-theoretical approach to exploring the phenomena of terrorism, crime, and mass shootings. Comiskey draws on social movement theory, social identity theory, radicalization, strain theory, and lone-actor grievance-fueled violence. While these theories illuminate the complexities of the threats, they sometimes fall short of capturing the intricacies of human cognition. The multi-theoretical approach enhances students' critical thinking, thus benefiting their performance in other academic courses and examination of evolving homeland threats.

### **NO. 5 INTEGRATING THEORY INTO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COURSES**

North Dakota State University Professor Caroline Hackerott examines educators' challenges in designing higher education emergency management courses. She focuses on integrating interdisciplinary approaches and theories into her courses that promote deep learning and critical thinking. In the *Vulnerable Populations in Disaster* course, students examine case studies, emergency management policies, theories, and practices to understand the vulnerabilities experienced by disadvantaged communities. Integrating theory, including systems theory and its associated theories, into emergency management courses provides students with a multifaceted understanding of how social systems interact throughout the disaster cycle, equipping them with the necessary skills to address vulnerabilities in the field.

**NO. 6 STUDYING LEARNING IN ACTION: A SCOPING REVIEW AND CROSS-DISCIPLINARY DISCUSSION OF CONCEPTUALIZING LEARNING IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY EDUCATION**

University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. candidate Jennifer Classen explores active learning methodologies in emergency management and homeland security higher education. Her scoping review of experiential, hands-on, team-based, and online learning helps us understand how students learn. The approaches provide prescient insights for educators seeking to develop effective emergency management and homeland security programs and courses to help professionalize and grow the field.

**NO. 7 TEACHING INTERSECTIONALITY: CONCEPTUALIZING LAYERED VULNERABILITY TO ADVANCE SOCIAL EQUITY AND RESILIENCE**

Professor Carol Cwiak of North Dakota State University shares an undergraduate approach to educating emergency management students about intersectionality. Intersectionality delves into how social categories, including race, sex, ethnicity, gender, disability, and class, intersect, leading to societal inequalities and marginalization. Cwiak's *Disaster Preparedness* course enhances students' awareness, fostering empathy and self-awareness. The course equips students to grasp the intricacies of community diversity and characteristics, emphasizing how marginalization contributes to vulnerability. The goal is to familiarize students with effective service and practice methods with real-world applications.

**NO. 8 COOPERATION THEORY IN NATIONAL SECURITY**

American Military University Professor Cynthia Nolan examines the theory of international collaboration in confronting global challenges. In response to events such as the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the University introduced the graduate course *Regional Security Cooperation* to help students understand the underpinnings of inter-state cooperation. The course encompasses international relations theories at international, regional, state, and individual levels, focusing on the drivers of collaboration. The course offers a comprehensive analysis of international relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, equipping students to apply international relations theory in real-world settings.

**NO. 9 TURNING CONCEPT INTO PRACTICE: PREPARING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS TO MANAGE CRISES UTILIZING A VIRTUAL TABLETOP EXERCISE**

Immaculate University Professor George Schwartz examines the development and implementation of his crisis leadership course, *Leading in Crisis*. The course offers a unique opportunity to turn theoretical concepts into practical skills. In this asynchronous course, students explore natural disaster case studies, video lectures, research projects, and a virtual tabletop exercise. The tabletop exercise immerses students in scenarios where they analyze situations, formulate recommendations

and action plans, and collaborate with their classmates. The online course helps students develop fundamental leadership, team, and crisis leadership skills, contributing to their learning experience.

**NO. 10 BIOLOGICAL SECURITY AND BIOTERRORISM: INFECTIOUS DISEASE-RELATED RISK, THEORY, PRACTICE, AND EDUCATION**

University of New Hampshire Professor Terrance O’Sullivan found that the COVID-19 pandemic prompted significant changes in homeland security/emergency management higher education curriculum. The University’s graduate course, *Biosecurity and Bioterrorism*, was modified to address risk mitigation and managing evolving global pandemics, infectious diseases, and biowarfare. The course provides students with an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of microbial public health risks, covering basic epidemiology, disease biology, vaccine science, and more. Recognizing the complexity of homeland security, literacy in global public health security is essential for effectively responding to the increasingly critical interdisciplinary risks posed by infectious disease emergencies, the rising threat of biological terrorism, and man-made biological disasters.

**NO. 11 FROM NEW KNOWLEDGE TO COMMUNITY OUTCOMES: A TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH MODEL FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY**

California State University Professor Shirley Feldman-Jensen presents a multi-directional pathway, a translational research model emphasizing the significance of practical learning experiences in emergency management/homeland security for graduate students. The M.S. in Emergency Services Administration program at California State University exemplifies the model, focusing on fostering leadership and critical thinking skills for community resilience. The program provides practical solutions to current issues in the emergency services community. The model integrates basic, applied, and translational research to tackle real-world challenges. The approach guides students to synthesize knowledge and research tools, applying them to develop practical policies for real-world scenarios or community resilience.

**NO. 12 STRAIGHTEN UP AND FLY RIGHT: ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY AND THE FEDERAL AIR MARSHAL SERVICE**

John Jay College Professor Lowell Dimoff delves into the challenges faced by the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS) post-9/11, revealing a lack of cohesive organizational unity. Drawing on organizational theories, including bureaucratic and contingency theories, Dimoff recommends new thought processes and practices that might improve the FAMS and help ensure U.S. transportation security. Dimoff underscores the need for a positive culture marked by shared attitudes, values, and methods to foster unity. Cultural shifts begin with leaders embracing new structures and norms in the work environment. Applying organizational theory can help FAMS establish a positive culture, enhancing mission fulfillment and readiness for future challenges.

### **WAYS FORWARD**

Theory to practice is an iterative process. Current events, threats, and hazards, including the Hamas-Israeli conflict, the Ukraine-Russian War, the resurgence of Great Power States, COVID-19, the Opioid epidemic, terrorism, climate security, election security, mass shootings, human trafficking, and the challenges and opportunities of rapidly evolving technologies, and particularly artificial intelligence require theoretical understanding, description, and prediction. The challenge is to bridge the gap between theory and practice. This special edition of the *Journal of Security, Intelligence, and Resilience Education* helps bridge that gap. Much work, however, remains. In the third issue of this volume, Christopher Bellavita, a homeland security rockstar, exhorted every homeland security academic, practitioner, and student to be their own theorist. That is an idea worth pursuing.

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