

The Global War on Terror

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This article contains 3 charts from the Global War on Terror, or GWOT as the military refers to it, and 1 chart on The (Irish) Troubles. These are standard celeration charts that are easy to read. They show a few important things. First, the terrorist attacks against the U.S. are decreasing. Second, they show not only the number of soldiers that died or were injured but also the number of soldiers with PTSD and TBI. These data account for the psychological trauma and lost wages. Third, these data show that military suicide is higher than civilian suicide.

Keywords: Global War on Terror, standard celeration chart, deceleration of terror

Most people who use the standard celeration chart see it in the form of the daily chart. However, there are other versions including weekly, monthly, and yearly standard celeration charts. All these are graphic analyses that depend on standardization, that is, the display of data on a standard form (Calkin, 2005; Pennypacker, Gutierrez, & Lindsley, 2003). Each chart is on 8[1/2]-inch by 11-inch paper. The print is blue, well designed and researched to be different from the black pencil or computer lines that show individual data points and the chart easy to view and read. Around the periphery of the grid are the items, which also make it standard—the type of chart, dates across the top, identifying labels of the project, the celeration fan, time references, and frequency up the left (or the y) and time across the bottom (or the x-axis). On any of the charts, celeration, or rate of growth, is $\times 2$, or $\div 2$ from corner to corner. A $\times 2$ celeration goes from the bottom left to the top right, or any line parallel to it. A $\div 2$ celeration goes from the top left to the bottom right, or any line parallel to that. All data in this article display on the yearly standard celeration chart. Three of the charts show yearly data and celeration lines of events involving terrorism. The fourth chart shows frequencies from the

impacts of war on four pinpoints across a 10-year span, and two frequencies from 2010.

This article contains three charts from the Global War on Terror, or GWOT as the military refers to it, and one chart on The (Irish) Troubles. Two of the GWOT charts show data from two sources on supposedly the same behavior: incidents of terrorism against the United States. Although different, these two sets of data are worth viewing together. Global Terrorism Database (GTD) defines terrorism as: “The threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation.”

Figure 1 shows data from *The Guardian* news service and extends from 1970 to 2011 with the stated pinpoint of terrorist attacks against the U.S. Figure 2 shows the other set of data on attacks, terrorist incidences against the U.S., and comes from the FBI from 1980 to 2010. Notice the deceleration on both these charts.

When comparing each set year by year across the span of several decades, it is obvious they are not frequencies of the same behaviors. However, what is critical is that both show overall deceleration patterns. This is especially important since the media lead us to believe either that terrorism continues to accelerate or that it is at least stable and is not decreasing. Celeration lines for the data in both Figures 1 and 2 show that the deceleration is $\div 1.2$ per five years or a slowing by 20% every five years. The data from *The Guardian* includes more total incidents than that from the FBI.

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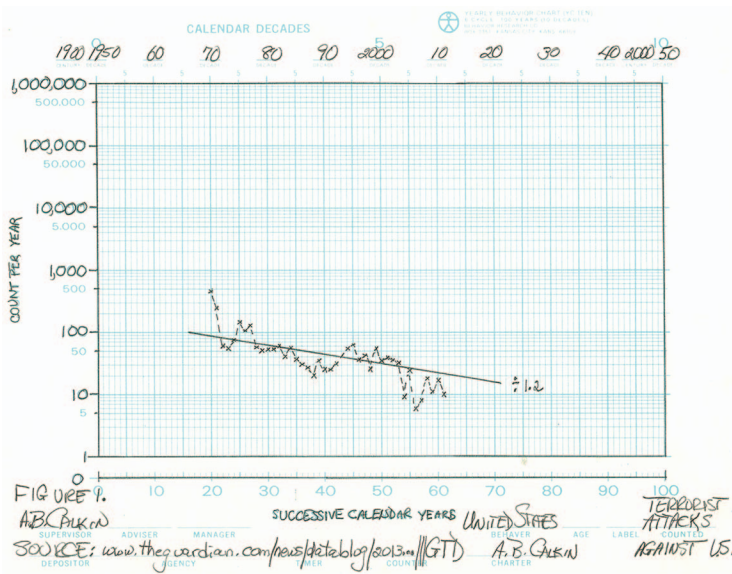


Figure 1. Terrorist attacks against the United States. Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2013/apr/17/four-decades-us-terror-attacks-listed-since-1970#table>

While the overall deceleration on the FBI charts is a $\div 1.2$ per half decade, it is important to do a trend analysis here. The first decade and a half shows a $\div 2$ deceleration of attacks against the U.S. with a jump-up for 1993, the

first attack on the World Trade Center. After a deceleration to a frequency of 1 for 1994 and 1995 each, the second trend is an increase of $\times 10$ until 2001, one of which was the destruction of the World Trade Center. Following

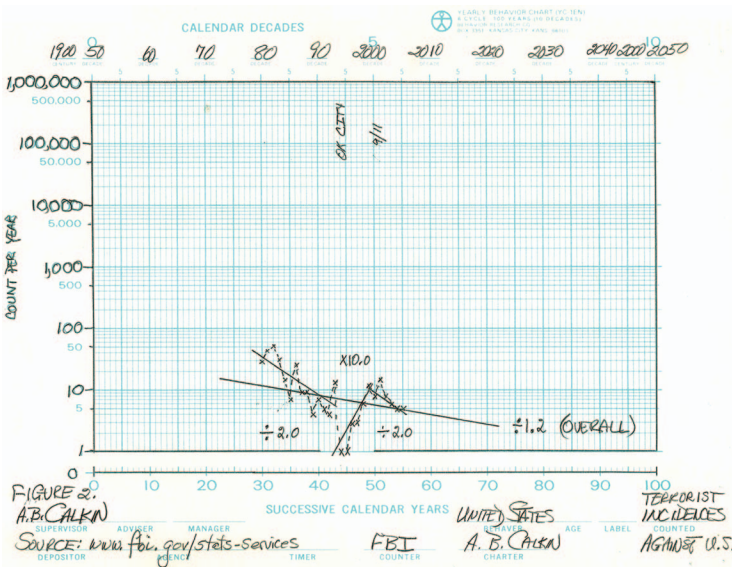


Figure 2. Terrorist incidences against the United States. Source: <http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services>

that, the third trend is a second $\div 2$ deceleration. A person could surmise from this that if there is once again such an increase, that we might need to prepare for or divert another major terrorist attack. However, given that any behavior of an individual may have 25 to 50 determinants, an interesting $\times 2$ factor and the behavior of a social system—voting behavior in the first election in Russia according to Alexei Shustov’s research (personal communication, July 2007), it is vital to look at factors other than just the frequencies and celeration of terrorist attacks. When he researched voters, candidates, officials, and others, he concluded that political behavior has 97 elements.

Figure 3 shows deaths from the (Irish) Troubles. After a startling steep acceleration of $\times 50$ per half decade in just the first five years from terrorist incidents during The Troubles, deaths from terrorism decelerated at a $\div 1.3$ every five years. After that, with periodic maintenance of the occurrence of deaths, the overall deceleration was the $\div 1.3$ per half decade.

Figure 4 shows the impact that GWOT had on survivors: wounded soldiers, soldiers with traumatic brain injury (TBI), those with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The chart also includes the number of U.S. deaths. Deaths in Iraq for the US by the end of 2012 were 4,488.

These figures for Afghanistan were 2,340 (icasualties.org). Total of OIF and OEF for the US alone are 6,805 through 2012. I did not plot these data on a yearly chart and, therefore, have no celeration for them. I found no accurate numbers for civilian deaths and did not include the varying estimates.

The suicide data are broader. The chart compares military suicides to civilian ones for the year 2010. I can make no conclusive statements about this comparison because I could not determine the U.S. active, reserve, and discharged military population alive in 2010. Suffice it to say that the general population suicide rate was $\times 5$ greater than that of the military. However, I doubt that the civilian population is only $\times 5$ larger than the total present and former military population.

These charts have three significant findings. First, overall terrorist incidents against the U.S. are decreasing, perhaps not fast enough but still decreasing. Second, these are the first data from any of the U.S. wars that show not only the number of physically wounded but also the number of TBI and PTSD wounded, also an important cost of war in physical repair and care, lost wages, and psychological trauma. Third, suicide rates are too high es-

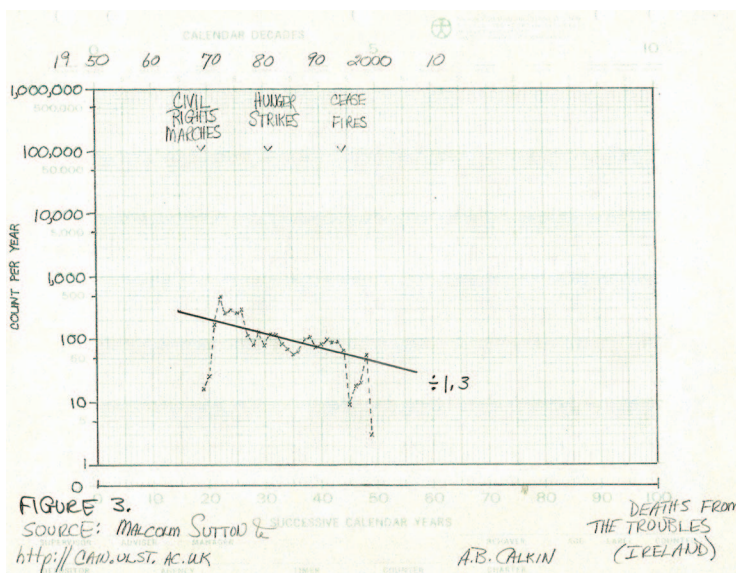


Figure 3. Deaths from The Troubles (Ireland). Source: Malcom Sutton (2001) and <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk>

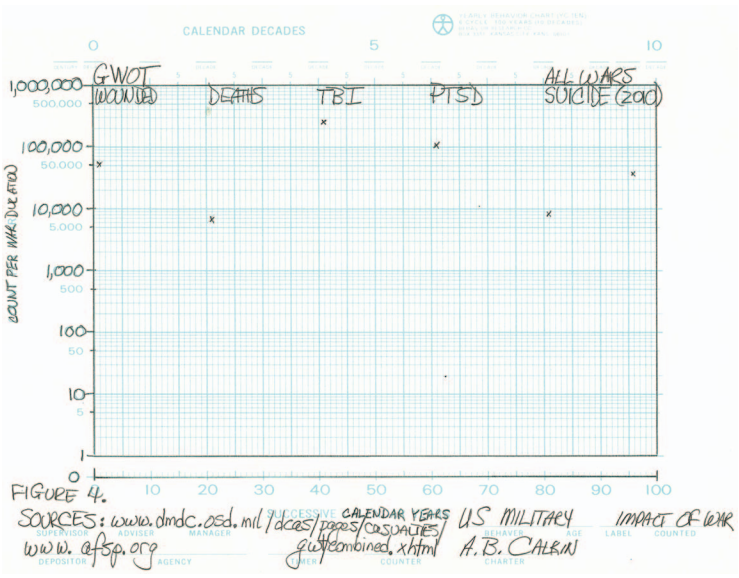


Figure 4. Impact of war. Sources: <http://www.afsp.org> and <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/casualties/gwt/combined.xhtml>

pecially when compared to the civilian population.

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