

Raquel Silva

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Year started: 2011

F/T or P/T: Full time

Supervisor(s): Basia Spalek and [Surinder Guru \(/staff/profiles/social-policy/guru-surinder.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/social-policy/guru-surinder.aspx)

Research topic

'The Armed Political Struggle in Portugal: the experience of the participants and the role played by the State'

Background and professional experience

I accomplished my undergraduate studies in Psychology, and my masters studies in Justice Psychology at the University of Minho in Portugal. After finishing my MA (2010) I worked for three months at the University of Minho in research about corporative crime.

Teaching/training experience

- Lesson about 'The Justice Psychology' in the discipline of Civics, Maximinos High School, Braga
- Lesson about 'Terrorism' in the course of Psychosociology of Crime II, 4th year of MA of Justice Psychology at University of Minho
- Organisation of a conferences about 'Volunteering', 'Behavioural Styles' and 'Sex in the 21st Century'. Youth Organisation Fortalece Jovern, Viseu.
- Organisation of a conference about 'Development Issues on Children'. Kindergarten Sonho Magico, Viseu.
- Organisation of various lectures on 'Stress Management', 'Telephone Answering Skills', 'Bullying' and 'Skills of Assisting Victims and Offenders' in the context of MA internship in the Police (GNR) directed to policemen.

Research Overview

Despite the considerable research and policy attention that terrorism has generated (Schmid & Jongman, 1988; Crenshaw, 1990), as a phenomenon in Portugal this has so far received little attention, even though during the pre and post 1974 revolutionary eras, terrorism was carried out by wide-ranging left and right wing armed political groups.

The aim of my research is to gather empirical data about the experiences and perspectives of those individuals engaged in terrorism pre and post 1974, in order to shed some light upon the social and political factors involved in why individuals carried out acts of violence, also what the objectives to their armed struggles were. Also, given the lack of consensus over how terrorism is defined, this study will explore actors' own understandings of their violent acts. This is important, not only because terrorism studies have traditionally lacked empirical data generated by those carrying out acts of violence (Breen Smyth, 2007), but also because this study will help explore the social and political conditions in Portugal that helped create and sustain terrorism in order to try to prevent the creation of such conditions in the future, through making policy recommendations. At the same time, state responses to terrorism will be explored through the perspectives and experiences of state actors such as policy makers and police, this research being linked to emerging research on the role that state actors can play in counter-terrorism (Spalek et al, 2009; Lambert, 2010, Spalek, 2010).

Publications

Silva, R (in press), Terrorismo: definicoes, motivacoes, funcionamento e abordagens psicossociologicas. *Pela Lei e Pela Grei: REvista da Guarda Nacional Republicana*.

Silva, R (in press), O envolvimento na luta armada politica em Portugal: a perspectiva dos seus actores. *Analise Psicologica*.

Silva, R (2010) Bullying escolar. *Pela Lei e Pela Grei: Revista da Guarda Nacional Republicana*, 87, 50-51.