

# Annotated Bibliography (Topically Arranged)

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★ Books or articles that are must reads to understand the Islamic State

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## The Fight against the Islamic State

### Competition of Narrative

Aviles, Weston and Sarah Canna, editors. White Paper on Influence in an Age of Rising Connectedness. Strategic Multi-Layer (SMA) Periodic Publication [August 2017].

From the preface: "The articles in this white paper explore and present possible implications for how such changing geopolitical and technical factors may necessitate an explicit focus upon "influence," and how influence could exert effects on national, regional, and global levels over the next several decades. It assesses these revolutionary changes from political, sociological, biological, cognitive, and technical perspectives."

Cleveland, Charles T., Ryan Crocker, Daniel Egel, Andrew M. Liepman, and David Maxwell, "An American Way of Political Warfare: A Proposal," RAND Corporation Perspective [July 2018].

[https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE300/PE304/RAND\\_PE304.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE300/PE304/RAND_PE304.pdf) [accessed 26 July 2018].

★ Green, Stuart A. *Cognitive Warfare*. Thesis for the Joint Military Intelligence College, July 2008.

This is an excellent work that has been highly influential in shaping my thinking regarding the definition and explanation of narrative space. I met him when he briefed his thesis at a counter-terrorism conference in Israel. Excellent thinker and one who understands the dynamics of narrative.

Helmus, Todd C., Elizabeth Bodine-Baron, Andrew Radin, Madeline Magnuson, Joshua Mendelsohn, William Marcellino, Andriy Bega, Zev Winkelman. 2018. *Russian Social Media Influence: Understanding Russian Propaganda in Eastern Europe*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2018. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR2237.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2237.html) [accessed 15 October 2018].

Holshek, Christopher, editor. *PKSOI Paper Volume 4: 2017-2018 Civil Affairs Issue Papers: Civil Affairs: A Force for Consolidating Gains*. Presented by The Civil Affairs Association In coordination with the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center & School/Special Operations Center of Excellence, International Peace & Security Institute, Alliance for Peacebuilding and the Foreign Area Officer Association, March 2018. <http://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/default/assets/File/CA%20issue%20paper%20volume%20IV.pdf> [accessed 20 March 2018].

Jacob, Frank. Editor. 2022. *War in Film: Semiotics and Conflict Related Sign Constructions on the Screen*. Marburg, Germany: Büchner-Verlag eG. [https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/53676/9783963178528\\_oa.pdf](https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/53676/9783963178528_oa.pdf) [accessed 24 June 2022].

Interesting connection of *Dune* to T.E. Lawrence.

Jonsson, Herbert, Lovisa Berg, Chatarina Edfeldt, and Bo G. Jansson. Editors. 2021. *Narratives Crossing Borders: The Dynamics of Cultural Interaction*. Stockholm, Sweden: Stockholm University Press. <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/50177/9789176351406.pdf> [accessed 24 June 2022].

Kuperwasser, Yossi and David Siman-Tov. Editors. 2019. *The Cognitive Campaign: Strategic and Intelligence Perspectives*. Tel Aviv, Israel: *The Institute of National Security Studies*, Memorandum 197 [October 2019]. [https://www.inss.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Memo197\\_e\\_compressed.pdf](https://www.inss.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Memo197_e_compressed.pdf) [accessed 6 November 2019].

★ Marcellino, William, Christopher Paul, Elizabeth L. Petrun Sayers, Michael Schwille, Ryan Bauer, Jason R. Vick, and Walter F. Landgraf III. 2021. *Developing, Disseminating, and Assessing Command Narrative: Anchoring Command Efforts on a Coherent Story*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

I don't like recommending this RAND study because it fails to truly express what narrative is, and its recommendations will make understanding and appreciation of narrative worse. There is way too much emphasis on some form of commander's intent and less on appreciating narrative as a way that people

process the world. Someone reading this will see narrative as superstory and not as the foundational terrain on which all understanding of the world occurs.

That said, this is a necessary reference as they do a good job of capturing a lot of the academic literature on the topic even if it is flawed material.

Marone, Francesco. *Digital Jihad: Online Communication and Violent Extremism*. Milano, Italy: Ledizioni LediPublishing, 2019.

[https://www.academia.edu/41450999/IS\\_and\\_the\\_Others.\\_A\\_Topic\\_Analysis\\_of\\_Pro-\\_and\\_Anti-IS\\_Discourse\\_on\\_Arabic-Speaking\\_Twitter](https://www.academia.edu/41450999/IS_and_the_Others._A_Topic_Analysis_of_Pro-_and_Anti-IS_Discourse_on_Arabic-Speaking_Twitter) [accessed 15 May 2020].

McClory, Jonathan. *The Soft Power 30: A Global Ranking of Soft Power 2017*. Portland, USC Center on Public Diplomacy, July 2017. <https://softpower30.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/The-Soft-Power-30-Report-2017-Web-1.pdf> [accessed 24 April 2018].

McFate, Sean, "The West is losing today's infowars and must hit back hard," *The Economist* interview with the author. [5 February 2019]. <https://www.economist.com/open-future/2019/02/05/the-west-is-losing-todays-infowars-and-must-hit-back-hard> [accessed 26 February 2019].

Nye, Joseph S. Jr. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs, 2004.

A form of maneuver in the narrative space. The difference is that the author only addresses the existence of soft power without explaining how to actually make it effective in engagement and promotion of policy.

Paul, Christopher, Jessica Yeats, Colin P. Clarke, and Miriam Matthews. *Assessing and Evaluating Department of Defense Efforts to Inform, Influence, and Persuade*. Desk Reference. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2015.

[https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR800/RR809z1/RAND\\_RR809z1.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR800/RR809z1/RAND_RR809z1.pdf) [accessed 2 February 2019].

Reyna, Stephen P. *Deadly Contradictions: The New American Empire and Global Warring*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2016.

[https://www.berghahnbooks.com/downloads/OpenAccess/ReynaDeadly/9781789209525\\_OA.pdf](https://www.berghahnbooks.com/downloads/OpenAccess/ReynaDeadly/9781789209525_OA.pdf) [accessed 4 November 2021].

This is a Marxist screed with lost of specialized and difficult terms. It does present an interesting approach to war, but I would argue that the gain is not worth the effort needed to be expended. To understand the vocabulary. The gist is that America is bad because it defends the interests of wealthy elites with socially sanctioned violence.

Riva-Mossman, Susan Kay. *Conflict Narratives: Mediation Case Studies in an Intercultural Context*. Dissertation for University of Nebraska, Omaha, Nebraska. 15 June 2009.

[https://www.taosinstitute.net/Websites/taos/files/Content/5693761/Susi\\_Riva\\_-\\_Conflict\\_Narratives.pdf](https://www.taosinstitute.net/Websites/taos/files/Content/5693761/Susi_Riva_-_Conflict_Narratives.pdf) [accessed 23 July 2018].

Tainov, Aidar. *Achilles' Heel of Daesh Propaganda*. MMAS Thesis U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Leavenworth, Kansas, 2017.

[https://www.academia.edu/40831734/Achilles\\_Heel\\_of\\_Daesh\\_Propaganda](https://www.academia.edu/40831734/Achilles_Heel_of_Daesh_Propaganda) [accessed 13 February 2021].

Treverton, Gregory F., Andrew Thvedt, Alicia R. Chen, Kathy Lee, and Madeline McCue. *Addressing Hybrid Threats*. Swedish Defense University Center for Asymmetric Threat Studies [May 2018].

<https://www.hybridcoe.fi/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Treverton-AddressingHybridThreats.pdf> [accessed 13 May 2018].

This is a multi-part series on influence operations (narrative war).

Part 1: Mattis, Peter, "Contrasting China's and Russia's Influence Operations," *War on the Rocks* [16 January 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/01/contrasting-chinas-russias-influence->

[operations/](#) [accessed 27 February 2018].

Part 2: Mattis, Peter, "China's 'Three Warfares' in Perspective," *War on the Rocks* [30 January 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/01/chinas-three-warfares-perspective/> [accessed 27 February 2018].

Part 3: Helfont, Samuel, "Iraq's Real Weapons of Mass Destruction Were 'Political Operations'," *War on the Rocks* [26 February 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/02/iraqs-real-weapons-mass-destruction-political-operations/> [accessed 27 February 2018].

Part 4: Heath, Timothy, "Beijing's Influence Operations Target Chinese Diaspora," *War on the Rocks* [1 March 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/03/beijings-influence-operations-target-chinese-diaspora/> [accessed 2 March 2018].

Ahern, Dylan, "The Social Embeddedness of ISIS Traced: Back to the Roots of the Insurgent Organization," Bachelor's Thesis Political Science: International Relations, June 2015, University of Amsterdam Department of Political Science. [https://www.academia.edu/17958590/The\\_Social\\_Embeddedness\\_of\\_ISIS\\_Traced\\_Back\\_to\\_the\\_Roots\\_of\\_the\\_Insurgent\\_Organization](https://www.academia.edu/17958590/The_Social_Embeddedness_of_ISIS_Traced_Back_to_the_Roots_of_the_Insurgent_Organization) [accessed 19 July 2021].

The value of this thesis is its use of a social science term called social embeddedness. This thesis provides a definition and literature connections. Based on the author's use of this phrase it seems to be similar to the resonance between a story and a societal narrative.

- ★ Allen, T.S. "The Once and Future InfoWars," *War on the Rocks* [27 March 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/03/the-once-and-future-infowars/> [accessed 27 March 2018].

This is a book review: David Patrikarakos, *War in 140 Characters: How Social Media is Reshaping Conflict in the Twenty-First Century* (Basic Books, 2017). The review is an excellent challenge to those who espouse and extreme form of narrative war success. It is a useful foil for developing a better and nuanced argument in favor of the importance of narrative.

- ★ Allenby, Brad and Joel Garreau, "Weaponized Narrative Is the New Battlespace," *Defense One* [3 January 2017]. <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2017/01/weaponized-narrative-new-battlespace/134284/> [accessed 5 January 2017].

Short commentary on the relationship between "fake news" and narrative. They use the phrase weaponized narrative rather than MITNS.

Asda'a Burson-Marsteller, "8th Annual Asda'a Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey: Inside the Hearts and Minds of Arab Youth," ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller conducted by international polling firm Penn Schoen Berland (PSB) [April 2016]. [file:///C:/Users/blste/Downloads/2016-AYS-White-Paper-EN\\_12042016100316.pdf](file:///C:/Users/blste/Downloads/2016-AYS-White-Paper-EN_12042016100316.pdf) [accessed 12 April 2016].

Astorino-Courtois, Allison, editor. "SMA White Paper: A Cognitive Capabilities Agenda: A Multi-Step Approach for Closing DoD's Cognitive Capability Gap," Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment Office (SMA) [October 2017].

The best quotes from the paper include the following:

At present, the US military largely considers operations focused on the cognitive effects as "information operations (IO)."

Our most pressing strategic objectives, like deterrence and compellance, are ultimately mental concepts without physical reality. They live in the brain. Since war is a human endeavor, all military operations affect the thinking and the behavior of our human adversaries.

Atlamazoglou, Stavros, "Taking on Russia and China means US Special Operations Command is rethinking how it fights the propaganda war," *Business Insider* [12 August 2021]. <https://www.businessinsider.com/us-special-operators-rethink-propaganda-to-counter-russia->

[china-2021-8](#) [accessed 18 Auguste 2021].

Baines, Paul, "Foreign Attempts at Election Manipulation Through Disinformation: An Electoral Resilience Perspective," Strategic Multi-Layer (SMA) Fake News Speaker Series, Pentagon [21 July 2017].

This paper for presentation includes useful information regarding the history of Russian disinformation campaigns.

Banach, Stefan J. "From 9/11 to London: The Need for Virtual Battle Space Maneuver Doctrine," *Small Wars Journal* [11 June 2017]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/from-911-to-london-the-need-for-virtual-battle-space-maneuver-doctrine> [accessed 6 March 2018].

Banach, Stefan J. "From Reagan to Entropy: The Need for a U.S. National Technology Based Strategy," *Small Wars Journal* [24 August 2017]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/from-reagan-to-entropy-the-need-for-a-us-national-technology-based-strategy> [accessed 6 March 2018].

Banach, Stefan J. "Virtual War – A Revolution in Human Affairs," *Small Wars Journal* [1 February 2018]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/virtual-war—a-revolution-in-human-affairs> [accessed 6 March 2018].

★ Berger, J.M., "America Isn't Losing the War of Ideas to ISIS", *Defense One* [11 November 2015]. <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2015/11/america-isnt-losing-war-ideas-isis/123604/> [accessed 13 November 2015].

★ Bloch, Marc. Reflections of a Historian on an on an on an on the False News of the War. (originally published in 1921) Translated by James P. Holoka. *Michigan War Studies Review*, 1 July 2013. <http://www.miwsr.com/2013/downloads/2013-051.pdf> [accessed 27 November 2017].

Marc Bloch is a towering historian. His discussion on the accuracy of war reporting is critical to understanding how information and stories are distorted both incidentally and intentionally.

Bodo, Lorand, and Anne Speckhard, "Identifying Nefarious Telegram Users without the Help of Telegram Itself: Testing Solutions for Intelligence and Security Professionals in Fighting ISIS in the Encrypted Social Media Space," International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism [15 July 2017]. [https://www.academia.edu/33889485/Identifying\\_Nefarious\\_Telegram\\_Users\\_without\\_the\\_Help\\_of\\_Telegram\\_Itself\\_Testing\\_Solutions\\_for\\_Intelligence\\_and\\_Security\\_Professionals\\_in\\_Fighting\\_ISIS\\_in\\_the\\_Encrypted\\_Social\\_Media\\_Space](https://www.academia.edu/33889485/Identifying_Nefarious_Telegram_Users_without_the_Help_of_Telegram_Itself_Testing_Solutions_for_Intelligence_and_Security_Professionals_in_Fighting_ISIS_in_the_Encrypted_Social_Media_Space) [accessed 16 July 2017].

Brandom, Russell, "The Anonymous 'war on ISIS' is already falling apart", *The Verge* [23 November 2015]. <http://www.theverge.com/2015/11/23/9782330/anonymous-war-on-isis-hackivism-terrorism> [accessed 24 November 2015].

Bridge, Donna J. and Ken A. Paller, "Neural Correlates of Reactivation and Retrieval-Induced Distortion," *The Journal of Neuroscience*, August 29, 2012, 32(35):12144–12151. <http://www.jneurosci.org/content/jneuro/32/35/12144.full.pdf> [accessed 19 April 2018].

★ Brooking, Emerson T. and P.W. Singer, "War Goes Viral," *The Atlantic*, November 2016. <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/11/war-goes-viral/501125/> [accessed 18 November 2016].

I am a big fan of P.W. Singer and strongly recommend reading anything written by him. This article is another one that causes a reader to reassess an understanding of the world. In this case, it is the function of social media in conflict and in redefining conflict. As stated elsewhere in work on Maneuver in the Narrative Space, social media is a tool that both promotes and distorts narratives.

★ Chinn, Jacquelyn Nicole. "Communication Power In Israeli Digital Diplomacy: Towards A Networked Theory of Geopolitics." Dissertation, Texas A&M University, 2015.

The value in this work is the literature review and the brief summation of soft power.

Christian, Patrick James, "A Reformulated Model of Narrative Mediation of Emerging Culture Conflict,"

*The International Journal of Conflict Engagement and Resolution* 2014 (2) 2, 76-94.

<https://heinonline->

[org.proxy.library.umkc.edu/HOL/Page?collection=journals&handle=hein.journals/ijconfer2&id=78](https://heinonline-org.proxy.library.umkc.edu/HOL/Page?collection=journals&handle=hein.journals/ijconfer2&id=78)  
[accessed 23 July 2018].

- ★ Cobaugh, Paul, “A Five-Point Strategy to Oppose Russian Narrative Warfare,” *Medium* [25 April 2018].  
<https://medium.com/@paulcobaugh/a-five-point-strategy-to-oppose-russian-narrative-warfare-56e0006aab2a> [accessed 28 April 2018].

This is a fantastic discussion on the importance of narrative. The article also includes practical approaches for being more successful with narrative. Great job!

Cobaugh, Paul, “CVE without narrative – “A book without a story”,” from *Countering Violent Extremism Building an evidence-base for the prevention of radicalization and violent extremism*, Institute for Applied Prevention Research, 2018, 11-22.

<http://www.praeventionstag.de/daten/module/buecher/en/ISBN-978-3-96409-063-8/2-Caubaug.pdf> [accessed 8 February 2019].

Cobaugh, Paul, “Ethical Influence: the broken-down, rusting vehicle of American power,” *Narrative Strategies* [April 2020]. [https://2fb6b479-2a03-4037-9e43-eafca872d49a.filesusr.com/ugd/22e2d2\\_e543540ec2444930ad82d62caa18870b.pdf](https://2fb6b479-2a03-4037-9e43-eafca872d49a.filesusr.com/ugd/22e2d2_e543540ec2444930ad82d62caa18870b.pdf) [accessed 20 May 2020].

- ★ Cobb, Sara, David Laws, and Carlos Sluzki, “Modeling Negotiation Using “Narrative Grammar”: Exploring the Evolution of Meaning in a Simulated Negotiation,” Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2013 [1 February 2013]. <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10726-012-9334-2> [accessed 28 March 2016].

The Collaborative and Adaptive Security Initiative (CASI), “Engaging Narratives: The New (Old) Battlefield,” Washington DC: George Washington University [23 and 24 May 2017].

Courty, Audrey, Halim Rane, and Kasun Ubayasiri, “Blood and ink: the relationship between Islamic State propaganda and Western media,” *The Journal of International Communication*, 2158-3471 [4 December 2018]. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13216597.2018.1544162> [accessed 1 June 2021].

- ★ Crawford, Kate and Trevor Paglen, “Excavating AI: The Politics of Images in Machine Learning Training Sets,” AI Now Institute [19 September 2019]. <https://excavating.ai/> [accessed 2 June 2021]

This is considered to be one of the most important articles identifying problems with AI driven identification and classification.

- ★ CSIS, “Disinformation in the Arab World,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, Babel: Translating the Middle East [14 June 2022]. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/disinformation-arab-world> [accessed 17 June 2022].

Read this transcript of a powerfully important interview. Nadia Oweidat is a Jordanian-American scholar and researcher and she makes some profoundly important statements including the following:

“... delving into this research, I really wonder how much of the negative opinion [in the Middle East] now is actually authentic or organic, and how much of it is, in fact, directed—directed by authoritarian forces within the region and outside the region. And I am not really sure that a lot of these grievances are actually grassroots. In fact, what I'm seeing is that there are investments being made to voices that focus solely on everything negative about the West, the United States, liberal values, and democracy.”

“No matter how good an idea is, if we don't support it and there is instead support for an idea that is much worse, you know which one is going to rule the day.”

“We need to really take that war of ideas seriously.”

She is refreshingly correct and this short discussion reminds all of us the importance of waging the narrative war (or the war of ideas) intelligently and competently. She implies that the U.S. government does not do either and she seems to wonder why as if the U.S. government had done better in an earlier period. It hadn't.



What changed is that in the earlier period (pre-2001), the U.S. located media establishment told the story of the benefits that come from a free, open, liberal, and diverse society. U.S. movies and television into the 1990s told stories of the goodness and greatness of America and the American system specifically, and Western ideals more broadly. It is important to remember that in the late 1980s the most popular television show in South Africa as well as America was about a black American doctor and his family – *The Cosby Show*. That was amazing and had to have an impact in the narrative war against Apartheid.

The U.S. government will fail in the narrative war so long as it is in direct competition with the media produced and promulgated from its own territory.

Dasgupta, Rana, "The demise of the nation state," *The Guardian* [5 April 2018].

[https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/apr/05/demise-of-the-nation-state-rana-dasgupta?CMP=share\\_btn\\_fb](https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/apr/05/demise-of-the-nation-state-rana-dasgupta?CMP=share_btn_fb) [accessed 11 August 2018].

David, Arnel P. and John DeRosa, "Wargaming Contested Narratives in an Age of Bewilderment," *The Strategy Bridge* [16 January 2020]. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2020/1/16/wargaming-contested-narratives-in-an-age-of-bewilderment> [accessed 16 January 2020].

Degerlund, Kurt, "Micro-Blog and Lead," *The Strategy Bridge* [15 July 2018].

<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2015/7/15/micro-blog-and-lead> [accessed 17 July 2018].

- ★ Deibler, Kevin, "#LikeWar: We Need a National Information Strategy," *LinkedIn Post* [18 October 2018]. [https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/likewar-we-need-national-information-strategy-kevin-deibler/?lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad\\_flagship3\\_feed%3BgTjql%2FqzQD%2BNfLtCKYKdDQ%3D%3D&licu=urn%3Ali%3Acontrol%3Ad\\_flagship3\\_feed-link](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/likewar-we-need-national-information-strategy-kevin-deibler/?lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad_flagship3_feed%3BgTjql%2FqzQD%2BNfLtCKYKdDQ%3D%3D&licu=urn%3Ali%3Acontrol%3Ad_flagship3_feed-link) [accessed 23 October 2018].

- ★ DeRosa, John, "Revising the Battle of the Narrative," *Small Wars Journal* [16 July 2015]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/revising-the-battle-of-the-narrative> [accessed 17 July 2015].

DeRosa, John, "Narrative "Braiding" and the Role of Public Officials in Transforming the Public's Conflicts," *Medium* [3 April 2016]. <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Braiding-New-Narratives-in-Syria-and-Iraq---Narrative-Exploration.html> [accessed 13 August 2020].

- ★ DiResta, Renee, "The Digital Maginot Line," *Ribbon Farm.com* [28 November 2018]. <https://www.ribbonfarm.com/2018/11/28/the-digital-maginot-line/> [accessed 5 December 2018].

This is excellent. It is a great companion to Peter W. Singer's book *#LikeWar*. Though I disagree with the author's reading of the Maginot Line, I think the warnings are truly important. Please read.

- ★ Eisler, David F., "Beyond Finding the Enemy: Embracing Sociocultural Intelligence in Stability Operations," *Small Wars Journal* [14 July 2015]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/beyond-finding-the-enemy-embracing-sociocultural-intelligence-in-stability-operations> [accessed 16 July 2015].

el-Badawy, Emman, Milo Comerford, and Peter Welby, "Inside the Jihadi Mind: Understanding Ideology and Propaganda," *The Centre on Religion & Geopolitics, The Tony Blair Faith Foundation* [October 2015].

El-Gamal, Jasmine, "Alternative Messaging and Countering Violent Extremism," *Building Peace Forum* [29 April 2016]. <http://buildingpeaceforum.com/2016/04/alternative-narratives-and-countering-violent-extremism/> [accessed 19 August 2016].

- ★ Farwell, James P. "Adversarial Tactics to Undercut US Interests in New Generation Warfare 2019," *Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) Future of Global Competition & Conflict* [3 May 2019]. [https://nsiteam.com/social/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Farewell\\_Adversarial-Tactics.pdf](https://nsiteam.com/social/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Farewell_Adversarial-Tactics.pdf) [accessed 27 May 2019].

Excellent explanation of narrative with respect to Russia and China. The best line is "Story and narrative provide historical, political, military, and cultural context and dimension. Narrative explains who you are, what you are doing, your cause, how you pursue it, why target audiences should be interested, and what it means for them. Narratives bind together players, actions, and objectives in related stories so audiences can make sense of events."

Ferguson, Kate, "Countering violent extremism through media and communication strategies: A review of the evidence," Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research, University of East Anglia [1 March 2016]. <http://www.paccsresearch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Countering-Violent-Extremism-Through-Media-and-Communication-Strategies-.pdf> [accessed 3 July 2018].

Fernandez, Alberto M. "Here to stay and growing: Combating ISIS propaganda networks," The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World, U.S.-Islamic World Forum Papers 2015 [October 2015].

- ★ Finlayson, Mark A. and Steven R. Corman (2013). The Military Interest in Narrative. *Sprache Und Datenverarbeitung (International Journal for Language Data Processing)*, 37(1-2), 173–191. [http://www.uvrr.de/index.php/anglistik/SDV\\_Vol\\_37\\_1-2\\_2013\\_Formal\\_and\\_Computational\\_Models\\_of\\_Narrative.html](http://www.uvrr.de/index.php/anglistik/SDV_Vol_37_1-2_2013_Formal_and_Computational_Models_of_Narrative.html) [accessed 28 June 2016].

Good summary on the value of narrative in conflict. He is overly focused on narrative as a form of story rather than understanding narrative as the environment, but a great source of other information on narrative understanding from a literature perspective.

Fletcher, Angus and Thomas Gaines, "The Limits of Logic: Why Narrative Thinking is Better Suited to the Demands of Modern Combat," *Modern Warfare Institute* [19 October 2021]. <https://mwi.usma.edu/the-limits-of-logic-why-narrative-thinking-is-better-suited-to-the-demands-of-modern-combat/> [accessed 3 November 2021].

I am not a fan of the article, but I think that argument has merit in that the argument is that narrative helps to circumvent problems associated with logic flaws.

Gambhir, Harleen, "Why ISIS is So Successful," *The Cipher Brief* [9 March 2016]. <http://thecipherbrief.com/article/middle-east/why-isis-so-successful> [accessed 9 March 2016].

The "expert" is wrong in that she advocates for a counter-narrative as offensive not recognizing the importance of the positive narrative message.

Gambrell, Jon, "In Persian Gulf, computer hacking now a cross-border fear," *Fifth Domain* [12 September 2017]. <https://www.fifthdomain.com/international/2017/09/12/in-persian-gulf-computer-hacking-now-a-cross-border-fear/> [accessed 13 September 2017].

- ★ Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed and Nathaniel Barr, "Fixing How We Fight the Islamic State's Narrative", *War on the Rocks* [4 January 2016]. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/01/fixing-how-we-fight-the-islamic-states-narrative/> [accessed 4 January 2016].

The authors make several mistakes in the article, but this provides some serious and important suggestions for the counter-narrative campaign.

Gates, Robert M. "The U.S. needs to relearn how to tell its story to the world," *The Washington Post* [16 April 2023]. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/04/15/robert-gates-us-strategic-communications-russia-china/> [accessed 18 April 2023].

Secretary Gates is absolutely right that the U.S. needs to tell its story to the world, but he misses that narratives aren't built globally, and they aren't communicated that way either. Narratives, and I believe narrative war, starts domestically. American success with its global narrative was not a result of American foreign diplomacy nor was it because of the USIA. It was because America believed that it was the best nation on earth. It was comfortable with itself. When I say America, I mean American government, American industry, and American media. The world loved America because it saw it through the eyes of Frank Capra, John Ford, and dozens of other Hollywood directors, actors, musicians, and sports stars; each of whom acted and portrayed an America that was great, comparatively.

The comparatively matters. The message that has infused American culture since the Vietnam War has been one of failure, corruption, and falsehood. America has been degraded by the same categories of voices who lionized it as Emerald City with the Great and Powerful Oz as a little old man greedily pulling levers and barking orders from behind a curtain. Neither message was nor is accurate. America has and had flaws, some of



which were significant, but at no point has America's flaws been equal to those of its competitors. Both Russia and China are significantly more corrupt, racist, and flawed than America ever has been on its worst day.

As we seek to make America better, which it should and needs to be, we need to communicate to the world that it is still the comparatively best country in the world. No one is traveling hundreds or thousands of miles to get into China or Russia. That should mean something.

People need to recognize that global power is comparative. The choice for the globe isn't a perfect order or a corrupt American one. The choice is an imperfect American order or a deeply flawed and dangerous Chinese one. That isn't a choice anyone outside of China should ever contemplate. What Secretary Gates calls for will only work when the plethora of American voices will again be expressing the goodness that is America. Only then will Public Diplomacy be effective in amplifying what the world is already hearing.

- ★ Giersea, Jeff, "Memetic Warfare – Part I: It's Time to Embrace Memetic Warfare," *Open Perspectives Exchange Network*, NATO Strategic Communication Center of Excellence, Riga, Latvia, Volume 1, Number 5, Spring 2017.  
[https://media.wix.com/ugd/b3eb9d\\_8ec08636119741b9a877c84763c31560.pdf](https://media.wix.com/ugd/b3eb9d_8ec08636119741b9a877c84763c31560.pdf) [accessed 16 May 2017].
- ★ Giersea, Jeff, "Memetic Warfare – Part II: Hacking Hearts and Minds: How Memetic Warfare is Transforming Cyberwar," *Open Perspectives Exchange Network*, NATO Strategic Communication Center of Excellence, Riga, Latvia, Volume 1, Number 6, Spring 2017.  
[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/b3eb9d\\_c4eaab8cf2df4d068a33457d53774666.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/b3eb9d_c4eaab8cf2df4d068a33457d53774666.pdf) [accessed 16 May 2017].

Both of these articles are critical for understanding a component of MiTNS. In this case, the author is explaining and advocating for the use of social media as a tool in the current conflict environment.

Giordano, James, editor. "White Paper on Assessing and Anticipating Threats to US Security Interests: A Bio-Psycho-Social Science Approach for Understanding the Emergence of and Mitigating Violence and Terrorism," Strategic Multi-Layer (SMA) Periodic Publication [March 2016].  
<http://nsiteam.com/social/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Anticipating-Threats-to-US-Security-Interests-MAR-2016.pdf> [accessed 7 June 2017].

Two articles from this white paper have particular value. They are

Understanding The Social Context: Following Social And Narrative Change Via Discourse And Thematic Analysis Surrounding Daesh In The Middle East: Dr. Lawrence A. Kuznar, Indiana University–Purdue University, Fort Wayne, and NSI, Inc.

The Urgency To Shift Paradigm On The War Against ISIS In The Narrative Space: Dr. Christophe Morin, Fielding Graduate University

Glazzard, Andrew, "Losing the Plot: Narrative, Counter-Narrative and Violent Extremism," International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague, ICCT Research Paper [May 2017 <https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ICCT-Glazzard-Losing-the-Plot-May-2017.pdf> [accessed 3 July 2018].

- ★ Goldberg, Amir; Stein, Sarah K. (2018). Beyond Social Contagion: Associative Diffusion and the Emergence of Cultural Variation. *American Sociological Review*, September 2018.  
<http://web.stanford.edu/~amirgo/docs/beyond.pdf> [accessed 25 September 2018].

This is a dense read, but it is useful for those looking seriously at the source of cultural differentiation amongst people.

Excellent support for the narrative landscape expression of culture. In one way, the authors express that people are inclined to accept culturally changing events and experiences that coincide with their previous inclinations. Using the narrative landscape model, people are inclined to go in a direction of least resistance or an object is inclined to roll downhill.

Goldhill, Olivia, "African Extremist Group Al-Shebab Shows Trump in Latest Recruitment Video", *Defense One* [3 January 2016]. <http://www.defenseone.com/threats/2016/01/african-extremist-group-al->

[shebab-shows-trump-latest-recruitment-video/124818/](#) [accessed 4 January 2016].

This is fulfillment of Hillary Clinton's comments that ISIS would use Trump's comments as part of recruiting video.

- ★ Gould, Joe, "US-ISIS Rumors Hard to Counter, General Says", *Defense News* [21 May 2015]. <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/show-daily/sofic/2015/05/19/us-isis-rumors-hard-to-counter-general-says/27616311/> [accessed 21 May 2015].
- Harrell, David L. "Before the Engagement: Mapping Social Media for Civil Military Operations," *The Civil Affairs Association* [22 November 2018]. <https://www.civilaffairsassoc.org/single-post/2018/11/22/Before-the-Engagement-Mapping-Social-Media-for-Civil-Military-Operations> [accessed 2 December 2018]
- Harris, Shane, "This Is ISIS's New Favorite App for Secret Messages", *The Daily Beast* [16 November 2015]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/11/16/this-is-isis-new-favorite-app-for-secret-messages.html> [accessed 17 November 2015].
- Hartley, Dean S. III and Kenneth O. Jobson, "Persuasion Wars, Part 1: How and why it works: an examination of the power, use and misuse of persuasion from Aristotle to modern-day analytics." *Communications* [17 May 2019]. <https://pubsonline.informs.org/doi/10.1287/orms.2019.03.08/full/> [accessed 19 July 2021].
- Hartley, Dean S. III and Kenneth O. Jobson, "Persuasion Wars, Part 2: Why we care and what we should do: a continued examination of the power, use and misuse of persuasion from Aristotle to modern-day analytics." *Communications* [30 July 2019]. <https://pubsonline.informs.org/doi/10.1287/orms.2019.04.05/full/> [accessed 19 July 2021].
- Hatherell, Michael, "Populist Narratives and the Making of National Strategy," *The Strategy Bridge* [26 June 2018]. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2018/6/26/populist-narratives-and-the-making-of-national-strategy> [accessed 26 June 2018].
- Heller, Jason, "How Sci-Fi Writers Imagine Iraq's Future," *The Atlantic* [15 October 2017]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2017/10/how-sci-fi-writers-imagine-iraqs-future/541512/> [accessed 16 November 2017].
- Herrmann, Jon, "Defense and Self-Defense in the Information Age: Collaborative Strategy and Collective Vision," *The Strategy Bridge* [5 April 2018]. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2018/4/5/defense-and-self-defense-in-the-information-age-collaborative-strategy-and-collective-vision> [accessed 9 April 2018].
- Hinnant, Lori, "Islamic State backers find ephemeral platform in Instagram," *Military Times* [21 September 2017]. <http://www.militarytimes.com/news/2017/09/21/islamic-state-backers-find-ephemeral-platform-in-instagram/> [accessed 21 September 2017].
- Hollings, Alex, "21st Century Warfare: SOCOM places fake news, social media in its crosshairs," *SOFREP News* [13 April 2018]. <https://sofrep.com/101901/21st-century-warfare-socom-places-fake-news-social-media-in-its-crosshairs/> [accessed 18 April 2018].
- Hollings, Alex, "SOFREP Exclusive: The battle for perception in 21st century warfare with Dr. Ajit Maan, founder of Narrative Strategies," *SOFREP News* [25 April 2018]. <https://sofrep.com/102427/sofrep-exclusive-the-battle-for-perception-in-21st-century-warfare-with-dr-ajit-maan-founder-of-narrative-strategies/> [accessed 26 April 2018].
- Holshek, Christopher, "Populism's Call to Citizenship," *Resilient Civilians in Hybrid and Population-Centric Warfare* [9 May 2019]. <https://site.uit.no/hybrid/2019/05/09/populisms-call-to-citizenship/> [accessed 13 May 2019].
- ICT Cyber-Desk, "Analysis of Cyber Trends 2016," International Institute for Counter-Terrorism,

November 2016.

[https://www.ict.org.il/Article.aspx?ID=1854&utm\\_source=activetrail&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=CyberDesk](https://www.ict.org.il/Article.aspx?ID=1854&utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=CyberDesk) [accessed 26 November 2016].

Simple report with a useful summary of cyber trends and the competition between ISIS and al-Qaeda in the cyber domain.

Ingram, Haroro J. "The strategic logic of Islamic State information operations," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 2015 Vol. 69, No. 6, 729–752.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2015.1059799> [accessed 19 April 2018].

Ingram, Haroro J. "What Happens When ISIS Becomes an Online Caliphate?" *The National Interest* [31 July 2017]. <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/what-happens-when-isis-becomes-online-caliphate-21732?page=show> [accessed 19 April 2018].

- ★ Ingram, Haroro J. and Craig Whiteside, "In Search of the Virtual Caliphate: Convenient Fallacy, Dangerous Distraction," *War on the Rocks* [27 September 2017].  
<https://warontherocks.com/2017/09/in-search-of-the-virtual-caliphate-convenient-fallacy-dangerous-distraction/> [accessed 19 April 2018].

**Critical definition of defeat.** It also has an important explanation of the virtual caliphate.

Isakhan, Benjamin, "The Islamic State Attacks on Shia Holy Sites and the "Shrine Protection Narrative": Threats to Sacred Space as a Mobilization Frame," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2020, 32:4, 724-748, DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2017.1398741 [8 January 2018].

[https://www.academia.edu/36103574/The\\_Islamic\\_State\\_Attacks\\_on\\_Shia\\_Holy\\_Sites\\_and\\_the\\_Shrine\\_Protection\\_Narrative\\_Threats\\_to\\_Sacred\\_Space\\_as\\_a\\_Mobilization\\_Frame](https://www.academia.edu/36103574/The_Islamic_State_Attacks_on_Shia_Holy_Sites_and_the_Shrine_Protection_Narrative_Threats_to_Sacred_Space_as_a_Mobilization_Frame) [accessed 21 May 2021].

The article contains excellent sources and good quotes reference the mobilization of anti-ISIS efforts in Syria and Iraq. The academic approach is that of social movement theory.

Jackson, Richard, "Language Power and Politics: Critical Discourse Analysis and the War on Terrorism," *49th Parallel*, Spring 2005, <https://fortyninthparalleljournal.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/1-jackson-language-powerand-politics.pdf> [accessed 30 November 2019].

Jayamaha, Buddhika B. and Jahara Matissek, "Coercion: New Means & Methods: Social Media Warriors: Leveraging a New Battlespace," *Parameters*, 48(4) Winter 2018–19, 11-23.  
[https://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/Parameters/Issues/Winter\\_2018-19/5\\_Jayamaha.pdf](https://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/Parameters/Issues/Winter_2018-19/5_Jayamaha.pdf) [accessed 28 May 2019].

Jones, Jeffrey B., Daniel T. Kuehl, Daniel Burgess, and Russell Rochte, "Strategic Communication and the Combatant Commander," *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 55, 4th Quarter 2009, 104-108.  
<http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a515171.pdf> [accessed 12 September 2017].

- ★ Kaltenthaler, Karl and Arie Kruglanski, "The Three N Approach to Strategies for United States Government Information Operations," *Strategic Multilayer Assessment* [May 2021].  
<https://nsiteam.com/the-three-n-approach-to-strategies-for-united-states-government-information-operations/> [accessed 5 September 2022].

This is more than a year old, but I just read it. I strongly recommend this for its simplicity to all those involved in the information operations world. The three Ns discussed in the paper are needs, networks, and narratives. I think the authors are wrong in calling them narratives as they are actually stories, but that wouldn't work out so well with the mnemonic so stick with the three Ns as they have them.

This is brilliant because it is simple, and it is correct. To do this properly, we need to do our homework with respect to recognizing the needs and the cognitive dissonance that exist between what people believe they should have and what they do have. That is what generates the need. The network is the trusted agents that the person or group connect with and will listen to and adjust their behavior accordingly. The narrative (story) is the way that the call to action is being transmitted. Simple and complete.

The biggest challenge for practitioners is getting this all in the correct context.

Kalvik, Jan H. "Insight: Interview with Dr. Ajit Maan, Narrative Strategies," *Defence & Intelligence Norway* [17 March 2018]. <http://www.etterretningen.no/2018/03/17/insight-interview-with-dr-ajit-maan-narrative-strategies/> [accessed 18 March 2018].

This interview contains a simple and clear definition of the role of narrative in conflict. For those who are confused about the differences in definitions of narrative and story, the definition here should clear up those misconceptions.

Karl, Luke, Joseph Lane, and David Sanchez, "How to Stop Losing the Information War," *Defense One* [26 July 2018]. <https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2018/07/how-stop-losing-information-war/150056/> [accessed 28 July 2018].

Kheel, Rebecca, "Pentagon blasts ISIS proposals that would lead to 'apocalyptic war'", *The Hill* [9 December 2015]. <http://thehill.com/policy/defense/262634-pentagon-criticizes-ideas-that-feed-apocalyptic-war-with-isis> [accessed 10 December 2015].

Includes Ted Cruz quote about sand glowing in the dark.

King, Iain, "What Do Cognitive Biases Mean for Deterrence?" *The Strategy Bridge* [12 February 2019]. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2019/2/12/what-do-cognitive-biases-mean-for-deterrence> [accessed 18 February 2019].

★ Koerner, Brendan I. "Why ISIS is Winning the Social Media War." *Wired* [March 2016]. <http://www.wired.com/2016/03/isis-winning-social-media-war-heres-beat/> [accessed 8 April 2016].

Krebs, Ronald R. Rethinking the Battle of Ideas: How the United States Can Help Muslim Moderates. *Orbis*, Spring 2008, 332-346.

Kuznar, Lawrence A., George Popp, and Nicole Peterson, "Discourse Indicators of Gray Zone Activity: Russian-Estonian Relations Case Study," Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment (SMA) Contract Publication with NSI Team [11 January 2016]. <http://nsiteam.com/social/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/NSI-Discourse-Analysis-of-Russian-Cyberattack-on-Estonia.pdf> [accessed 21 June 2017].

This paper could be included with the Russian pieces, but the real focus of the paper is on the connection between use of language and actions conducted in the Gray Zone.

Kuznar, Lawrence A., George Popp, and Nicole Peterson, "Discourse Indicators of Gray Zone Activity: South China Sea Case Study," Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment (SMA) Contract Publication with NSI Team [17 January 2016]. <http://nsiteam.com/social/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/NSI-Discourse-Analysis-Case-Study-South-China-Sea.pdf> [accessed 20 June 2017].

This paper could be included with the China pieces, but the real focus of the paper is on the connection between use of language and actions conducted in the Gray Zone. The linkages are loose and the article is not as powerful as desired. It still provides some social science background and connectivity between words spoken and actions taken. For that reason, it is worth considering.

Kuznar, Lawrence A., George Popp, and Nicole Peterson, "Discourse Indicators of Gray Zone Activity: Crimean Annexation Case Study," Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment (SMA) Contract Publication with NSI Team [5 January 2017]. <http://nsiteam.com/social/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/NSI-Discourse-Analysis-of-Russian-Annexation-of-Crimea.pdf> [accessed 21 June 2017].

This paper could be included with the Russian pieces, but the real focus of the paper is on the connection between use of language and actions conducted in the Gray Zone.

Lapowsky, Iessie, "Gruesome Jihadi Content Still Flourishes on Facebook and Google+," *Wired* [17 May 2018]. <https://www.wired.com/story/jihadi-content-still-on-facebook-google/> [accessed 21 May 2018].

Lindenlaub, Nic, "Lessons from Syria's Low-Profile Narrative War," War Room of the US Army War College [7 January 2021]. <https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/articles/narrative-war/> [accessed 22 January 2021].

- ★ Maan, Ajit, "Narrative: The Critical Component of Counter-Terrorism Strategy," *Small Wars Journal* [14 July 2015]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/narrative-the-critical-component-of-counter-terrorism-strategy> [accessed 27 May 2017].

This is a short, yet brilliantly written explanation of the value of narrative with the best suggested narrative for the fight at hand.

- ★ Maan, Ajit, "Narratives are about 'meaning,' not 'truth'," *Foreign Policy* [3 December 2015]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/12/03/narratives-are-about-meaning-not-truth/> [accessed 27 May 2017].

An excellent explanation of the difference between ideas and narratives.

Maan, Ajit, "Narrative: The Critical Component of Counter-Terrorism Strategy," *Defence and Intelligence Norway* [16 March 2016]. <http://www.etterretningen.no/2016/03/16/narrative-the-critical-component-of-counter-terrorism-strategy/> [accessed 13 March 2018].

- ★ Maan, Ajit, "Narrative Warfare," *Real Clear Defense* [27 February 2018]. [https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/02/27/narrative\\_warfare\\_113118.html](https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/02/27/narrative_warfare_113118.html) [accessed 27 February 2018].

This is a great summary of the importance of narrative in shaping what war really is: influence. In this article, Dr. Maan places narrative at the center of the strategic debate – precisely where it should be.

- ★ Maan, Ajit, "Fighting the Fight We Are In," *SOF News: Special Operations News From Around the World* [27 February 2018]. <http://www.sof.news/io/fighting-the-fight-we-are-in/> [accessed 11 December 2018].

Fantastic article. Ajit Maan, Ph.D. captures the importance of narrative and its criticality to conflict success.

- ★ Maan, Ajit, "Plato's Fear: The Power of Poetry Over National Security," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [1 March 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/leadership-management/platos-fear-the-power-of-poetry-over-national-security/> [accessed 3 March 2019].

Ajit Maan, Ph.D. has effectively nailed the critical explanation of narrative. I must say that I differ slightly from the implication of this piece in that narratives are a thing. I think narrative is the environment in which we operate and make meaning of the world. Though the environment or narrative may not be a thing, it can be shaped by the stories, messages, and memes; or, in this case, the poems, songs, movies, and stories of the poets, authors, and actors.

Maan, Ajit, "Defeat Terrorists by Dominating the Narrative Space," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [22 May 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/defeat-terrorists-by-dominating-the-narrative-space/> [accessed 29 April 2019].

Maan, Ajit, "Column: NATO's Narrative Needs," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [19 March 2023]. <https://www.hstoday.us/featured/column-natos-narrative-needs/> [accessed 7 May 2023].

This has been on my to-read list for many weeks. It is worth reading for several reasons: the clarification of the meaning of propaganda, the correction of the distinction between information warfare and narrative warfare, and most importantly the emphasis on the importance of education in the narrative warfare in which we are engaged.

While I agree that the military should not be in the education business, I fear that academia is both incapable of providing and an adversary to the education that needs to occur. It isn't enough to teach people how to



learn or to be critical thinkers about and, more importantly, critical consumers of information. People need to be aware of the meaning of the message being expressed. Academia, writ large, is happy for anti-Western and anti-American messaging to be present in media. One does not need to agree with specific policies to recognize that Western and, specifically, American ideals and values have created the greatest advances in human development and flourishing. One can both be a proponent for improvements in behavior and policy while at the same time championing the systems that provided the life and lifestyle facilitating the critical environment. Modern Western and American academic institutions are, I fear, incapable of doing this. There are a few exceptions and at least one new institution being created that may provide hope, but I do not believe they are sufficient for the education envisioned in this article and necessary for the transformation needed.

So, what is to be done? I don't know, yet. What I think at the moment is that the education needs to come from outside the existing institutional model.

Maan, Ajit, "Column: Predictive Elements of Contagious Stories," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [28 June 2023]. <https://www.hstoday.us/featured/column-predictive-elements-of-contagious-stories/> [accessed 25 July 2023].

I am a fan of Ajit Maan, Ph.D.'s work. This one is short and provides a great explanation on the importance of story and primarily the critical importance of structure in story.

Please note her insistent tone regarding the negative of counter-narrative. Successful narrative war is not done through counter-narrative. It is done through proactive expression of one's own narrative.

- ★ Magdin, Radu, "How to Fight Russian Infowar in Central Europe," *Defense One* [12 October 2018]. <https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2018/10/how-fight-russian-infowar-central-europe/151909/> [accessed 15 October 2018].

Simple, but accurate to-do list for those interested in effectively engaging in narrative war.

- ★ Marche, Stephen, "Al Qaeda Won," *Foreign Policy* [10 September 2018]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/09/10/al-qaeda-won/> [accessed 11 September 2018].

Absolutely outstanding think piece! Please read. This is the article I wish I had written. Though the article calls it something different, he is expressing the core power of what I call *maneuver in the narrative space* or what others call narrative war.

Marchesini, Paula, "The End of Time or Time Reborn? Henri Bergson and the Metaphysics of Time in Contemporary Cosmology," *Philosophy and Cosmology*. Volume 21, 2018, 140-152. [http://ispcjournal.org/journals/2018-21/Marchesinii\\_PhC\\_vol\\_21\\_2018.pdf](http://ispcjournal.org/journals/2018-21/Marchesinii_PhC_vol_21_2018.pdf) [accessed 23 September 2018].

- ★ McCauley, Clark, "Toward a Psychology of Humiliation in Asymmetric Conflict," *American Psychologist*, 2017, Vol. 72, No. 3, 255–265. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/amp0000063> [accessed 12 May 2017].

Excellent discussion on the literature and definition of humiliation and how this might play in conflict and, specifically, terrorism. This is useful in discussing the depositional element of constructing narrative space. Important quotes include:

it is the pernicious effect of repeated, small humiliations that add up to a feeling of nearly unbearable despair and frustration, and a willingness on the part of some to do anything—even commit atrocities—in the belief that attacking the oppressor will restore their sense of dignity. (255)

These two scales were significantly correlated, suggesting that more history of humiliation led to more fear of future humiliation. (257)

In the present article, we propose that for humiliation to be felt, the individual must experience the self in a negative light while concurrently holding a negative attribution of blame to the other. (258)

humiliating situations typically involve a specific appraisal of damage combined with a specific appraisal of failure. (260)



Scheff's (1994) "feeling trap" might be such a system, in which being ashamed about not retaliating for injury makes us angry about being shamed, which makes us shamed for not retaliating, and so forth, in "a self-perpetuating loop of intensely painful feelings" (260)

Any prolonged emotional response is, by definition, a distortion of biobehavioral adaptation, and, as in the case of chronic anxiety, it may have the potential to create a disordered state of mind that affects normal judgment and function. When humiliation occurs on a group level, there may be so many events occurring over so many years that the experience becomes chronic, and that may be a factor in the special fury that is sometimes found in asymmetric group conflicts. (262)

groups with a culture of honor should feel more shame and more humiliation after failure to retaliate. (262)

This symmetry makes humiliation the prototypical emotional experience of asymmetric conflict. (263)

Tom Friedman (2003) wrote, "If I've learned one thing covering world affairs, it's this: The single most underappreciated force in international relations is humiliation." (263)

McKinney, Matt, "Anti-Muslim speaking circuit runs through rural Minnesota," *Kansas City Star* [20 April 2016]. <http://www.kansascity.com/news/nation-world/national/article72968832.html> [accessed 21 April 2016].

Miller, Greg, "Islamist militants turn to less-governed social-media platform," *The Washington Post* [29 October 2015]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/islamist-militants-turn-to-less-governed-social-media-platform/2015/10/29/265dbaea-7e53-11e5-beba-927fd8634498\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/islamist-militants-turn-to-less-governed-social-media-platform/2015/10/29/265dbaea-7e53-11e5-beba-927fd8634498_story.html) [accessed 3 November 2015].

Miller, Greg, "Panel casts doubt on U.S. propaganda efforts against ISIS," *The Washington Post* [2 December 2015]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/panel-casts-doubt-on-us-propaganda-efforts-against-isis/2015/12/02/ab7f9a14-9851-11e5-94f0-9eeaff906ef3\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/panel-casts-doubt-on-us-propaganda-efforts-against-isis/2015/12/02/ab7f9a14-9851-11e5-94f0-9eeaff906ef3_story.html) [accessed 3 December 2015].

The article explains the problems with the State department counter-narrative campaign and discusses the office that runs it and a review of actions taken by the office.

- ★ Miller, Greg and Scott Higham, "In a Propaganda War Against the ISIS, the U.S. Tried to Play by the Enemy's Rules", *The Washington Post* [8 May 2015]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/in-a-propaganda-war-us-tried-to-play-by-the-enemys-rules/2015/05/08/6eb6b732-e52f-11e4-81ea-0649268f729e\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/in-a-propaganda-war-us-tried-to-play-by-the-enemys-rules/2015/05/08/6eb6b732-e52f-11e4-81ea-0649268f729e_story.html) [accessed 12 May 2015].

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Reed, Alastair, "An Inconvenient Truth: Countering Terrorist Narratives – Fighting a Threat We Do Not Understand," International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague [2 July 2018].

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- ★ Sly, Liz, “Iraqis think the U.S. is in cahoots with the Islamic State, and it is hurting the war”, *Washington Post* [1 December 2015]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/iraqis-think-the-us-is-in-cahoots-with-isis-and-it-is-hurting-the-war/2015/12/01/d00968ec-9243-11e5-befa-99ceebcbb272\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/iraqis-think-the-us-is-in-cahoots-with-isis-and-it-is-hurting-the-war/2015/12/01/d00968ec-9243-11e5-befa-99ceebcbb272_story.html) [accessed 2 December 2015].

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Stevenson, John A. "Global Influence," Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) Quick Concepts Series [30 September 2019]. <https://nsiteam.com/sma-quick-concepts-series-global-influence/> [accessed 13 October 2019].

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Quote from executive summary: "Understanding other cultures well enough to successfully communicate and to navigate each information environment means a profound effort in putting ourselves in other cultures' shoes—trying to understand narratives around identity, political engagement and deeply held beliefs requires looking beyond language and into the cognitive domain to gain a clearer picture of the information environment (IE)."

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The gist is that those of extreme opinions generate a supportive cycle that only inspires others of extreme opinions even those who are of opposite ends of the ideological spectrum

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A new U.S. government organization for fighting the social media war against ISIS.

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Vallone, Dan, "Army at 250: Beyond a Slogan, the Army Needs a New Narrative Strategy," *War on the Rocks* [7 March 2023]. <https://warontherocks.com/2023/03/army-at-250-beyond-a-slogan-the-army-needs-a-new-narrative-strategy/> [accessed 9 March 2023].

The US Army does need a new narrative strategy. It needs a new story. Interestingly enough, the US Army was releasing new commercials which was a return to a previously successful messaging campaign and then accusations were made against the actor in the new "Be All You Can Be" commercials followed by an arrest.

Regardless of the veracity of the allegations this is the type of narrative warfare that is warned by those who talk about the attention economy. Present and future conflict will, in part, be dominated by unprovable charges and allegations. Leaders will be distracted by a near constant barrage of such things. Attention will be diverted to prevent the actor from focusing on the conflict.

That said, the US Army needs to know what its story is. To a degree it needs to understand what its identity is. It can't get caught in a counternarrative struggle. It needs to explain what it is to the American populace and to the world. I think the new ad campaign was a great start, but such a campaign is only a delivery mechanism. The US Army needs to be what the commercial claimed that it was and is. That needs to be demonstrated on the gunnery ranges, the maneuver areas, and in classrooms. That performance needs to then be shown to the world through global communication as well as humanitarian and conflict actions so that it is clear.

Vandepeer, Charles, "Self-Deception and the 'Conspiracy of Optimism'," *War on the Rocks* [31 January 2019]. <https://warontherocks.com/2019/01/self-deception-and-the-conspiracy-of-optimism/> [accessed 2 February 2019].

- ★ Veilleux-Lepage, Yannick, "Paradigmatic Shifts in Jihadism in Cyberspace: The Emerging Role of Unaffiliated Sympathizers in Islamic State's Social Media Strategy," *Journal of Terrorism Research*, volume 7, Issue 1 – January 2016, pages 36-51. <http://jtr.st-andrews.ac.uk/articles/10.15664/jtr.1183/> [accessed 15 June 2016].

Pivotal information on the evolution of the use of social media by jihadist groups and the methods employed by ISIS currently. The author explains the social media crowd-source philosophy and its roots in the *Inspire* magazine and similar actions.

- ★ Verdon, Theron, "The return of Khilafah: The constitutive narratives of Daesh," *Defence Strategic Communications*, NATO Strategic Communication Center of Excellence, Riga, Latvia, Volume 1, Number 1, Winter 2015, 76-98. [www.stratcomcoe.org/download/file/fid/3956](http://www.stratcomcoe.org/download/file/fid/3956) [accessed 16 May 2017].

This is a powerful discussion on narrative and how ISIS uses those narratives. Probably the best article on the topic I have yet read.

Verrall, Neil, "Re-Learning the Rules of the Game: Challenging and Countering Misinformation and Fakery," Strategic Multi-Layer (SMA) Fake News Speaker Series, Pentagon [21 July 2017].

Good information on words and meanings. This includes Russian terms for this effort. Emphasis is on "nothing new."

Waddell, Kaveh, "The US Government Is Secretly Huddling With Tech Firms to Fight Extremism," *Defense One* [9 March 2016]. <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2016/03/us-government-secretly-huddling-companies-fight-extremism-online/126542/> [accessed 10 March 2016].

The human rights concerns of governments working with tech and entertainment companies on counter-narrative related issues.

- ★ Walsh, Declan and Nada Rashwan, "'We're at War': A Covert Social Media Campaign Boosts Military Rulers," *The New York Times* [6 September 2019]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/06/world/middleeast/sudan-social-media.html> [accessed 10



September 2019].

Really interesting. This is another example of the role of social media in modern conflict. It is unclear how much this campaign actually changes opinions, but it seems to be an example of how social media can form opinions.

Warrick, Joby, "Islamic State getting trounced in battle for Arab hearts and minds, survey finds," *The Washington Post* [12 April 2016]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/islamic-state-getting-trounced-in-battle-for-arab-hearts-and-minds-survey-finds/2016/04/11/71c32774-0024-11e6-9203-7b8670959b88\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/islamic-state-getting-trounced-in-battle-for-arab-hearts-and-minds-survey-finds/2016/04/11/71c32774-0024-11e6-9203-7b8670959b88_story.html) [accessed 12 April 2016].

Whiteside, Craig, "Lighting the Path: the Evolution of the Islamic State Media Enterprise (2003-2016)," The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism [November 2016]. <https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/ICCT-Whiteside-Lighting-the-Path-the-Evolution-of-the-Islamic-State-Media-Enterprise-2003-2016-Nov2016.pdf> [accessed 19 April 2018].

Whiteside, Craig, "Lighting the Path: The Story of the Islamic State's Media Enterprise," *War on the Rocks* [12 December 2016]. <https://warontherocks.com/2016/12/lighting-the-path-the-story-of-the-islamic-states-media-enterprise/> [accessed 19 April 2018].

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Excellent data regarding international opinions on U.S. presidents.

- ★ Williams, Brad D. "Narrative, Cyberspace and the 21st Century Art of War," *Fifth Domain Cyber* [22 January 2017]. <http://fifthdomain.com/2017/01/22/narrative-cyberspace-and-the-21st-century-art-of-war/> [accessed 27 May 2017].

Short and concise argument for narrative as the critical element of conflict.

Winter, Charlie, "Totalitarianism 101: The Islamic State's Offline Propaganda Strategy," *Lawfare* [27 March 2016]. <https://www.lawfareblog.com/totalitarianism-101-islamic-states-offline-propaganda-strategy> [accessed 28 March 2016].

Winter, Charlie, "Trump's Immigration Order Is a Propaganda Victory for ISIS," *The Atlantic* [30 January 2017]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/01/trump-executive-order-isis-propaganda/514968/> [accessed 19 April 2018].

- ★ Winter, Charlie, "Media Jihad: The Islamic State's Doctrine for Information Warfare," The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR), London: Department of War Studies, King's College London, February 2017. [http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Media-jihad\\_web.pdf](http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Media-jihad_web.pdf) [accessed 23 April 2017].

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Winter, Charlie, "ICSR Insight: The ISIS Propaganda Decline," The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR), London: Department of War Studies, King's College London, 23 March 2017. <http://icsr.info/2017/03/icsr-insight-isis-propaganda-decline/> [accessed 19 April 2018].

- ★ Winter, Charlie, "What I Learned from Reading the Islamic State's Propaganda Instruction Manual," *Lawfare* [2 April 2017]. <https://lawfareblog.com/what-i-learned-reading-islamic-states-propaganda-instruction-manual> [accessed 23 April 2017].

This is an excellent and brief summary of the ISIS vision of the use of media as a weapon.

Winter, Charlie, "DAESH Propaganda, Before and After Its Collapse: Countering Violent Extremism," Riga, Latvia: NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence [June 2019]. <https://stratcomcoe.org/daesh-propaganda-and-after-its-collapse> [accessed 25 September 2019].

Excellent. Charlie Winter regularly provides the best analysis and this continues that trend. This is a relatively short discussion of two months in the ISIS media campaign (one in 2015 and one in 2019) to express the changes in volume, topic, and geographic distribution. A lot can be gleaned from the 17 or so pages of material.

- ★ Winter, Charlie and Colin P. Clarke, "Is ISIS Breaking Apart? What Its Media Operations Suggest," *Foreign Affairs* [31 January 2017]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2017-01-31/isis-breaking-apart> [accessed 22 February 2017].

Media output from ISIS is declining both in quantity and in the focus of the content. This leads to a conclusion of the inevitable breakup of the organization. Most commentators have failed to understand ISIS from the beginning. Does the decline and probable of its physical presence mean an equivalent decline of its actual presence?

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The question is whether or not there is a strategy or a communication problem regarding the strategy.

Yandura, Matthew J. "Voices of Moderate Islam," *IO Journal*, volume 3, issue 1, 10-16 [March 2011].

- ★ Zak, Paul J. "Why Inspiring Stories Make Us React: The Neuroscience of Narrative," *The Dana Foundation Cerebrum* [2 February 2015]. [http://www.dana.org/Cerebrum/2015/Why\\_Inspiring\\_Stories\\_Make\\_Us\\_React\\_The\\_Neuroscience\\_of\\_Narrative/](http://www.dana.org/Cerebrum/2015/Why_Inspiring_Stories_Make_Us_React_The_Neuroscience_of_Narrative/) [accessed 28 February 2019].

This is great! I express a hierarchy of narrative structure from narrative to master narratives, stories, messages, and finally memes. What this research provides is the importance of connection in the story. Everything in the narrative world needs to connect to the human brain or it has no affect and also no effect.

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## Jihadi Magazines (Inspire, Dabiq, Rumiya)

### Inspire

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Please read. I am not sure that I agree with the tone of this article, but Anne Speckhard is a legitimate expert with respect to former ISIS members so her work is always worth considering. I think that she is too cynical with respect to the role of religion in ISIS. I think two things can be true at once. Religion can be important and it can also be used to manipulate the actions of the fighters and worker bees. I think this is the case with ISIS. That said, read and think.

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Question: So what does victory against Islamic State look like?

Answer: ... I don't think these are traditional battles where you take the hill, plant the flag and go home to a victory parade. I've actually noted, in fact, that we're engaged in what is likely to be a generational struggle. We can put a stake through the heart of Islamic State as an army. We can put a stake through the heart of its leaders. You can take away its territory. But you can't put a stake through the heart of the ideas, of the ideology, that sadly, tragically, still has some attraction for some small numbers in the Islamic faith.

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Brief restatement of challenges still remaining in Iraq regardless of Mosul falling or not. ISIS is present in multiple locations and the rush to Mosul needs to be followed up with comprehensive security. Great quote from Adnani.

"Were we defeated when we lost the cities in Iraq and were in the desert without any city or land? ...It is the same, whether Allah blesses us with consolidation or we move into the bare, open desert, displaced and

pursued.”

Deutsche Welle, “Civilians told to leave 'IS'-held Iraqi city of Ramadi,” *Deutsche Welle* [30 November 2015]. <http://www.dw.com/en/civilians-told-to-leave-is-held-iraqi-city-of-ramadi/a-18884014> [accessed 1 December 2015].

The article states that an announcement went out telling civilians to leave Ramadi. It also contains suppositions on what this might mean.

Deutsche Welle, “Hundreds of civilians flee Mosul as IS loses grip on city,” *Deutsche Welle* [24 June 2017]. <http://www.dw.com/en/hundreds-of-civilians-flee-mosul-as-is-loses-grip-on-city/a-39401175> [accessed 26 June 2017].

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Diehl, Jackson, “There’s good news in Mosul — for now,” *The Washington Post* [25 December 2016]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/theres-good-news-in-mosul--for-now/2016/12/25/265ad37a-c876-11e6-85b5-76616a33048d\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/theres-good-news-in-mosul--for-now/2016/12/25/265ad37a-c876-11e6-85b5-76616a33048d_story.html) [accessed 28 December 2016].

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Fordham, Alice, “In Chaotic Iraq, ISIS Is Just One Challenge Among Many,” *National Public Radio* [9 February 2016]. <http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2016/02/09/465146827/in-chaotic-iraq-isis-is-just-one-challenge-among-many> [accessed 10 February 2016].

Fordham, Alice, “An Iraqi Town Is Retaken From ISIS, And Looting And Retribution Begin,” *National Public Radio* [16 November 2015]. [http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2015/11/16/456246515/after-taking-back-iraqi-town-yazidis-vow-revenge-on-isis-supporters?utm\\_medium=RSS&utm\\_campaign=conflictzones](http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2015/11/16/456246515/after-taking-back-iraqi-town-yazidis-vow-revenge-on-isis-supporters?utm_medium=RSS&utm_campaign=conflictzones) [accessed 17 November 2015].

Fordham, Alice, “No One Was Prepared To Care For So Many Wounded In Mosul,” *National Public Radio* [5 March 2017]. <http://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2017/03/05/518360464/no-one-was-prepared-to-care-for-so-many-wounded-in-mosul> [accessed 6 March 2017].

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Garland, Chad, “ISIS 'massacred' scores of civilians escaping Mosul, Iraqi officials say,” *Stars and Stripes*

[8 April 2017]. <https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/isis-massacred-scores-of-civilians-escaping-mosul-iraqi-officials-say-1.462588> [accessed 10 April 2017].

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This report is for official use only and therefore no links are provided.

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Ramadi is falling to the Iraq Security Force efforts. There are several articles along this line.

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Sisk, Richard, "Mission to Retake Fallujah from ISIS Delayed as Forces Focus on Mosul," *Military.com* [16 May 2016]. <http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/05/16/mission-to-retake-fallujah-isis-delayed-forces-focus-mosul.html> [accessed 17 May 2016].

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Warren said, "I am confident that the Iraqis are aware that they need to liberate Fallujah. Where it falls into the sequence -- Fallujah before Mosul, Fallujah after Mosul -- is unclear.

"From a military perspective, Fallujah doesn't have much impact on Mosul. So, you know, you don't need to liberate Fallujah in order to get to Mosul," he said. "Fallujah doesn't really have any tactical influence on Mosul. So then it becomes a political decision, right? This becomes a decision that, you know, is made at the political level. There is no military reason to liberate Fallujah now, to answer your question."

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## Fighting ISIS (Kurds)

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I am torn by this article. I hate it and I think that it has tremendous value. Let me explain why.

First, I hate it for three reasons:

1. The article is late to the discussion. Some of us have been arguing that killing human beings with drones during the global war on terror was wrong for more than 10 years. It would have been nice if *The New York Times* had used its significant media clout to wage this fight during the Obama administration when it would have mattered. This article is like criticizing referees by using a recorded game.
2. The article gives the impression that special operators are heartless or without compassion, which is, at best, a caricature of the complexity of the environment in which the fighting happened.
3. In connection with number 2, the article demonstrates little effort to name those senior leaders who had responsibility for this fight – people wearing stars.

Second, I feel the article has value for three reasons (yes, I am going for symmetry here).

1. War is complex. The fighting in Syria made most previous wars look very simple by comparison. The examples used in the article are often caricatures of how specific people responded to the complexity (see #2 above). How should a person respond to that complexity in terms of fighting ISIS in a complex networked environment with limited on the ground intelligence, but lots of contact and friendly casualties? Additionally, both in Syria and Iraq it was difficult to get partner forces to move forward without displays of American firepower. The actions identified in the article seem callused, but they may have been necessary. War is hell. That must never be forgotten, lest we enter it too easily.
2. We need to train U.S. military personnel much better on the local culture and environment so that they can read the signs provided by the technical marvels of the modern world. This article demonstrates the risks and costs when we fail to provide that training, even to the very best special operators.
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## How to fight ISIS

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- ★ Eisenstadt, Michael, "The War Against ISIL: In Search of a Viable Strategy", *War on the Rocks* [15 June 2015]. <http://warontherocks.com/2015/06/the-war-against-isil-in-search-of-a-viable-strategy/?singlepage=1> [accessed 22 June 2015].

Garellek, Alana, "Combatting the Al Shabaab Threat", *The Cipher Brief* [4 February 2016]. <http://www.vocativ.com/news/279369/under-mounting-pressure-isis-resorts-to-suicide-attacks/> [accessed 5 February 2016].

Statement by a former CIA station chief about the "quickest way to slow the growth of these al Qaeda affiliates is to "restore law and order to Somalia and to other failed states via good government coupled with law enforcement capabilities, an intelligence apparatus, and a working military that could challenge the terrorists."

Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed and Nathaniel Barr, "The Winner's Messaging Strategy of the Islamic State: Technically Excellent, Vulnerable to Disruption," A Wikistrat Commissioned Report [June 2015]. <http://wikistrat.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/The->

[Winner%E2%80%99s-Messaging-Strategy-of-the-Islamic-State-Wikistrat-report.pdf](#) [accessed 25 February 2016].

Gault, Matthew, "This Is How America's Special Forces Could Destroy ISIS", *National Interest* [4 December 2015]. <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/how-americas-special-forces-could-destroy-isis-14517> [accessed 7 December 2015].

The author references the ideas of Malcolm Nance who suggests a swarming approach to fighting ISIS.

- ★ Ghattas, Kim, "Departing Washington, Next Stop: Reality." *Foreign Policy* [2 July 2015]. [http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/07/02/departing-washington-next-stop-reality-beirut-syria/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=%2AEditors%20Picks&utm\\_campaign=2015\\_EditorsPicks\\_Promo\\_Russia\\_Direct\\_Jun29%20through%207%2F3%2072SO&w\\_p\\_login\\_redirect=0](http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/07/02/departing-washington-next-stop-reality-beirut-syria/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_term=%2AEditors%20Picks&utm_campaign=2015_EditorsPicks_Promo_Russia_Direct_Jun29%20through%207%2F3%2072SO&w_p_login_redirect=0) [accessed 4 July 2015].

Giorgis, Craig A. "On War's Trinity and the War against the Islamic State", *Marine Corps Gazette* (Vol. 99, No 12), December 2015, pages 8-10.

The author uses the paradoxical trinity from Clausewitz' *On War* to address the fight between the U.S. and ISIS.

- ★ Goldenberg, Ilan, Nicholas A. Heras, and Paul Scharre, "Defeating the Islamic State: A Bottom-Up Approach," a report of the Center for a New American Security ISIS Study Group [June 2016]. <http://www.cnas.org/defeating-the-Islamic-State> [accessed 27 June 2016].

The primary reason for recommending this report is that the sponsoring organization, CNAS, is headed by one of the most likely occupants of the secretary of defense position in a Clinton administration – Michèle Flournoy. Thus, this report might serve as a vision of where a Clinton administration might go with respect to fighting ISIS. The recommendations tend to fit within the schema of *maneuver in the narrative space* and is of interest for this bibliography. The primary recommendations are to be more forceful, fight Assad in Syria more directly, and build partners that can successfully hold ground against future extremist ideology once regained from ISIS. The "strategy" presented does not actually address an end-state other than to suggest status quo ante bellum.

Gorka, Sebastian, editor. *The Islamic State and Information Warfare: Defeating ISIS and the Broader Global Jihadist Movement*. Fort Bragg, North Carolina: Threat Knowledge Group, January 2015. [https://www.academia.edu/11749076/Designing\\_an\\_Information\\_Warfare\\_Campaign\\_Against\\_the\\_Global\\_Jihadi\\_Movement\\_2014\\_email\\_work\\_card=abstract-read-more](https://www.academia.edu/11749076/Designing_an_Information_Warfare_Campaign_Against_the_Global_Jihadi_Movement_2014_email_work_card=abstract-read-more) [accessed 6 November 2021].

This is a discussion of key elements that need to be conducted to achieve victory against the Islamic State. The participating authors include: Sebastian Gorka, Robert R. Reilly, Anthony H. Cordesman, J. Michael Waller, and Stephen Ulph.

Greene, Kevin, "What the Algerian Civil War Can Teach Us About Combating ISIS", *Political Violence @ a Glance* [14 January 2016]. [http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2016/01/14/what-the-algerian-civil-war-can-teach-us-about-combating-isis/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=New%20Campaign&utm\\_term=%2AMideast%20Brief](http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2016/01/14/what-the-algerian-civil-war-can-teach-us-about-combating-isis/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=New%20Campaign&utm_term=%2AMideast%20Brief) [accessed 19 January 2016].

The author suggests that the Algerian civil war has useful parallels for understanding ISIS and how to fight them.

Hellyer, Hisham A., "Why ISIS Cannot Be Negotiated With", *Defense One* [11 January 2016]. <http://www.defenseone.com/threats/2016/01/why-isis-cannot-be-negotiated/125020/> [accessed 12 January 2016].

This is rebuttal to the Jonathan Powell article on "Negotiate with ISIS." Dr. Hellyer is a Muslim who clearly has strong feelings that accepting the legitimacy of ISIS as a negotiating partner means to accept ISIS as legitimate which is unacceptable to his view of Islam. He does not say this, but this seems to be an underlying current of

his thoughts.

- ★ Ingram, Haroro J. and Craig Whiteside, "Don't Kill the Caliph! The Islamic State and the Pitfalls of Leadership Decapitation," *War on the Rocks* [2 June 2016].  
<http://warontherocks.com/2016/06/dont-kill-the-caliph-the-islamic-state-and-the-pitfalls-of-leadership-decapitation/> [accessed 2 June 2016].

This is the best discussion on the succession of leaders following the death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Important to read to understand the progression of leadership as ISIS moved from charismatic to bureaucratic leaders.

Issa, Philip, "Group says assault by US-led coalition disregarded civilian lives to capture ISIS capital in Syria," *Military Times* [5 June 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2018/06/05/group-says-assault-by-us-led-coalition-disregarded-civilian-lives-to-capture-syrian-city-under-isis-control/> [accessed 6 June 2018].

Jalal, Malik, "I am on the Kill List. This is what it feels like to be hunted by drones," *Independent* [12 April 2016]. <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/i-am-on-the-us-kill-list-this-is-what-it-feels-like-to-be-hunted-by-drones-a6980141.html> [accessed 13 April 2016].

- ★ Jordan, Jenna, "Attacking the Leader, Missing the Mark: Why Terrorist Groups Survive Decapitation Strikes," *International Security*, Vol 38, No. 4 (Spring 2014), pages 7-38.  
[http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/files/IS3804\\_pp007-038\\_rev.pdf](http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/files/IS3804_pp007-038_rev.pdf) [accessed 2 June 2016].

An important discussion with empirical and quantitative data on the weakness of decapitation for al-Qaeda and, I would suggest, ISIS as a strategy for group destruction.

Judson, Jen, "USSOCOM: 'Transregional' Approach Needed To Combat ISIS," *Defense News* [9 May 2016]. <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense-news/2016/05/09/us-special-operations-commander-transregional-approach-needed-combat-islamic-state/84141232/> [accessed 10 May 2016].

Kagan, Frederick W., Kimberly Kagan, Jennifer Cafarella, Harleen Gambhir, and Katherine Zimmerman, "U.S. Grand Strategy: Destroying ISIS and Al Qaeda, Report One: Al-Qaeda and ISIS: Existential Threats to the U.S. and Europe," *Institute for the Study of War* [January 2016].  
<http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/PLANEX%20Report%201%20--%20FINALFINALFINAL.pdf> [accessed 28 June 2016]

Excerpts from the Executive Summary

The key findings of this first report are:

- Salafi-jihadi military organizations, particularly ISIS and al Qaeda, are the greatest threat to the security and values of American and European citizens.
- Syrian al Qaeda affiliate Jabhat al Nusra poses one of the most significant long-term threats of any Salafi-jihadi group.
- ISIS and al Qaeda are more than terrorist groups; they are insurgencies. They use terrorism as a tactic, but these organizations are insurgencies that aim first to overthrow all existing governments in the Muslim world and replace them with their own, and later, to attack the West from a position of power to spread their ideology to all of humanity.
- Current counter-ISIS and –al Qaeda policies do not ensure the safety of the American people or the homeland.
- American and Western security requires the elimination of ISIS and al Qaeda regional bases and safe havens. Salafi-jihadi groups independent of al Qaeda and ISIS form a base of support from which the enemy draws strength and resilience.

Kagan, Frederick W., Kimberly Kagan, Jennifer Cafarella, Harleen Gambhir, Christopher Kozak, Hugo Spaulding, and Katherine Zimmerman, "U.S. Grand Strategy: Destroying ISIS and Al Qaeda, Report Two: Competing Visions for Syria and Iraq: The Myth of an Anti-ISIS Grand Coalition", *Institute for*

*the Study of War* [January 2016].

<http://post.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/PLANEX%20Report%202%20FINALFINAL.pdf>  
[accessed 7 February 2016]

Excerpts from the Executive Summary

Based off “an intensive multi-week planning exercise to frame, design, and evaluate potential courses of action that the United States could pursue to defeat the threat from the Islamic State in Iraq and al Sham (ISIS) and al Qaeda in Iraq and Syria.... This second report will define American strategic objectives in Iraq and Syria, identify the minimum necessary conditions for ending the conflicts there, and compare U.S. objectives with those of Iran, Russia, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia in order to understand actual convergences and divergences. The differences mean that the U.S. cannot rely heavily on international partners to achieve its objectives.”

The key findings of this second report are:

- The U.S. must accomplish four strategic objectives in Iraq and Syria to achieve vital national interests and secure its people: 1) destroy enemy groups; 2) end the communal, sectarian civil wars; 3) set conditions to prevent the reconstitution of enemy groups; and 4) extricate Iraq and Syria from regional and global conflicts.
- Any American strategy must take urgent measures to strengthen Iraqi Prime Minister Abadi and prepare contingency efforts for his fall. The collapse of the Abadi government and return of his predecessor Nuri al Maliki would be disastrous for the fight against ISIS.
- Ongoing international negotiations within the Vienna Framework are bypassing essential requirements for long-term success in Syria. Re-establishing a stable, unitary Syrian state that secures American interests requires the U.S. and its partners to 1) destroy ISIS, Jabhat al Nusra, and foreign Salafi-jihadi groups in Syria; 2) identify and strengthen interlocutors representing the Syrian opposition; 3) facilitate a negotiated settlement between the Syrian regime and opposition; 4) obtain regional acceptance of that settlement; 5) establish peace-enforcement mechanisms; and 6) reconstruct state institutions.
- The Salafi-jihadi militant base in Syria poses a threat to the U.S., but the U.S. must not simply attack it because that would put the U.S. at war with many Sunnis who must be incorporated into a future, post-Assad inclusive government. The U.S. must separate reconcilable from irreconcilable elements. These other Salafi-jihadi groups must meet the following conditions essential for core U.S. security objectives in order to participate: 1) break with Jabhat al Nusra and ISIS; 2) accept the principle of a future pluralistic and unitary Syrian state; 3) reject violent jihad; 4) commit to disarming to a policing and defensive level; 5) and commit to the elimination of the current shari’a court system and the establishment of political institution-based governance.
- The superficial convergence of Iranian, Russian, Turkish, and Saudi strategic objectives with those of the U.S. on ISIS as a threat masks significant divergences that will undermine U.S. security requirements. Iran and Russia both seek to reduce and eliminate U.S. influence in the Middle East and are not pursuing strategies that will ultimately defeat al Qaeda and ISIS in Syria or Iraq. Turkey’s support for the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist groups, some linked to al Qaeda, stem from the ruling party’s intent to reestablish itself as an independent, Muslim, regional power. Finally, Saudi Arabia’s objectives remain shaped by perceived existential threats from Iran and a growing succession crisis, causing key divergences, especially over support to Salafi-jihadi groups. The U.S. must lead efforts to resolve the crisis in Syria and cannot outsource them to partners.

Kohn, Sally, “Drone Strikes Are Creating Hatred Toward America That Will Last for Generations”, *Defense One* [9 December 2015]. <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2015/12/drone-strikes-are-creating-hatred-towards-america-will-last-generations/124327/> [accessed 10 December].

This is a high quality summary of the problems with drones.

Koven, Barnett S. “Keeping up with the Joneses: Development Assistance and the Diffusion of Insurgent Violence in Iraq,” Unpublished manuscript under review in 2016 at *The American Political Science Review* [received 11 March 2016].

- ★ Luttwak, Edward, “Let War Work,” *The Cipher Brief* [13 October 2016].  
<https://www.thecipherbrief.com/article/middle-east/let-war-work-1091> [accessed 17 October]

2016].

The tone of this discussion can appear callused, but the author makes a compelling point that it would serve us all to remember. War serves the purpose of providing, not just peace as the author states, but a better peace than pre-existed the war. If it does not serve that end then one should question not just the reason for the war, but the ethical and moral foundations for the decisions to go to war.

- ★ Mardini, Ramzy, "Don't Defeat ISIS, Yet," *The New York Times* [27 September 2016].  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/28/opinion/dont-defeat-isis-yet.html> [accessed 28 September 2016].

Powerful and short. This article explains some of the problems with the current state of affairs in Iraq with respect to ISIS. The single most important point is that this war has further fragmented the country, the state, and the society.

- ★ Matissek, Jahara, "Let's Make ISIS a State", *Cicero Magazine* [30 September 2015].  
<http://ciceromagazine.com/opinion/lets-make-isis-a-state/> [accessed 30 September 2015].

- ★ Natali, Denise, "Defeating Daesh and the Day After," Event Report for Institute for National Strategic Studies [27 July 2016].

This report came from a conference of more than a hundred experts on ISIS and the Middle East. This is one of the best assessments and set of recommendations that has been published so far. The assessment is sober and reasoned based off observed realities rather than political motivations. The report paints a stark picture of possibilities though it addresses the topic as if ISIS will be defeated.

- Olidort, Jacob, "The Game Theory of Terrorism: How ISIS Radicalizes Others," *Foreign Affairs* [10 December 2015]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2015-12-10/game-theory-terrorism> [accessed 30 June 2016].

Where this article stands out is in the reference to focal points as defined by Thomas Schelling. The author further elaborates on Schelling's concept of frames and using frames to help define the grid on which people think or focus. This has value in conceptualizing how people perceive narrative.

- Olson, Eric, "America's Not Ready for Today's Gray Wars", *Defense One* [10 December 2015].  
<http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2015/12/americas-not-ready-todays-gray-wars/124381/> [accessed 1 January 2016].

Former SOCOM commander advocating for SOCM-like thinking and capabilities across the force. The use of the term Gray Wars is a critical part in the shifting of terminology that occurred in 2015 from Hybrid to Gray. What will it become next?

- Phillips, James and Luke Coffey, "Next Steps for U.S. Policy in Syria and Iraq," *The Heritage Foundation* [26 April 2018]. <https://www.heritage.org/middle-east/report/next-steps-us-policy-syria-and-iraq> [accessed 30 April 2018].

- ★ Pietrucha, Mike, "Treating the Islamic State as a State," *War on the Rocks* [3 March 2016].  
<http://warontherocks.com/2016/03/treating-the-islamic-state-as-a-state/> [accessed 3 March 2016].

The author is both right and wrong. ISIS is a state and the response needs to be like dealing with a state. He is wrong about the all kinetic approach though.

- Posen, Barry R. "Contain ISIS," *The Atlantic* [20 November 2015].  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/11/isis-syria-iraq-containment/416799/> [accessed 16 March 2017].

Written following the attack on Paris in the fall of 2015 and the author makes the recommendation that the right strategy is one of containment. This is a plan in opposition to the simple solutions being espoused during the then contested presidential primary campaign.

- Powell, Jonathan, "Negotiate With ISIS", *The Atlantic* [7 December 2015].  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/12/negotiate-with-isis/419157/> [accessed



12 January 2016].

The author draws numerous parallels with other terrorist organization and says that we can negotiate with ISIS because we negotiated with them.

Robinson, Linda, "Assessment of the Politico-Military Campaign to Counter ISIL and Options for Adaptation," Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 22 April 2016.

[http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1290.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1290.html) [accessed 7 September 2016].

Quoted from the web site: Research Questions

1. What are the results of the U.S. strategy against ISIL in its first 18 months of implementation?
2. How capable are the military forces countering ISIL?
3. What are the principal gaps in capability that the United States or other partners would need to fill in order to achieve a successful counteroffensive?
4. What are the political intentions and conflicting interests that impede a successful counteroffensive?
5. What shortcomings exist in the overall conception or implementation of the current strategy?
6. Are other approaches more likely to succeed at lower cost and/or lower risk?
7. What measures might produce greater results in the near term?

This report assesses the campaign against the Islamic State (ISIL), focusing on the military and political lines of effort. The capabilities and motivations of the various counter-ISIL forces on the battlefield are assessed.... While the campaign has degraded ISIL by targeting leadership and retaking a portion of territory, achieving lasting defeat of ISIL will be elusive without local forces capable of holding territory. Successful conclusion of the campaign will require significantly increased effort on two fronts. First, more-comprehensive training, advising, and assisting will be required to create more-capable, coordinated indigenous forces of appropriate composition and enable them to regain and hold territory. Second, political agreements must be forged to resolve key drivers of conflict among Iraqis and Syrians. Without these elements, resurgent extremist violence is likely.

Russell, Brian, "Information War with the Islamic States in Iraq and the Levant: An Indirect Approach," *Small Wars Journal* [30 October 2015].

Shafqat, Shazar, "Is the U.S. Prepared for Islamic State's Latest Terror Tactic?" *Real Clear Defense* [20 September 2017].

[https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2017/09/20/is\\_the\\_us\\_prepared\\_for\\_islamic\\_states\\_latest\\_terror\\_tactic\\_112339.html](https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2017/09/20/is_the_us_prepared_for_islamic_states_latest_terror_tactic_112339.html) [accessed 21 September 2017].

Siniver, Asaf and Scott Lucas, "The Islamic State lexical battleground: US foreign policy and the abstraction of threat," *International Affairs*, 92: 1, 63–79 [2016].

[https://www.academia.edu/20257036/The\\_Islamic\\_State\\_Lexical\\_Battleground\\_US\\_Foreign\\_Policy\\_and\\_the\\_Abstraction\\_of\\_Threat](https://www.academia.edu/20257036/The_Islamic_State_Lexical_Battleground_US_Foreign_Policy_and_the_Abstraction_of_Threat) [accessed 28 October 2020].

South, Todd, "Civilian death cases in coalition strikes against ISIS reopened after 'War of Annihilation' report," *Military Times* [28 June 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2018/06/28/civilian-death-cases-in-coalition-strikes-against-isis-reopened-after-war-of-annihilation-report/> [accessed 29 June 2018].

Speckhard, Anne and Ahmet S. Yayla, "How ISIS Defectors Can Help Us Beat Terror," *Time* [1 August 2016]. <http://time.com/4401066/isis-defectors-terror/> [accessed 2 August 2016].

- ★ Spinney, Laura, "Is evil a disease? ISIS and the neuroscience of brutality," *New Scientist* [11 November 2015]. <https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg22830471-000-syndrome-e-can-neuroscience-explain-the-executioners-of-isis/> [accessed 18 January 2018].

This is an old article that I missed when it was first published. I found the summary of neuroscience with respect to extreme behavior to be important to informing the discussion now as well as when it was written.

Stavridis, James, "Syrian Ghosts," *Foreign Policy* [6 November 2015].

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/11/06/lessons-from-the-balkans-for-syria/> [accessed 9 November

2015].

- ★ Steed, Brian L., "Changing the Conversation: Conceptualizing the Fight against Non-State and Post-State Actors", April 2015

Steger, David, "Subject: Idea for creative critical thinking exercise involving ISIS", email [6 December 2015].

The author provides a metaphor for fighting ISIS that likens the conflict with the Herculean task of fighting the hydra and how Hercules had to heal the wounds of the hydra as quickly as he defeated heads.

Tierney, Dominic, "Make No Mistake: A Syrian Safe Zone is a Major Intervention", *The Atlantic* [10 November 2015]. <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2015/11/make-no-mistake-syrian-safe-zone-major-intervention/123561/> [accessed 11 November 2015].

Votel, Joseph L., Charles T. Cleveland, Charles T. Connett, and William Irwin, "Unconventional Warfare in the Gray Zone," *Joint Forces Quarterly* [1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2016].  
<http://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/NewsArticleView/tabid/7849/Article/643108/unconventional-warfare-in-the-gray-zone.aspx> [accessed 18 March 2016].

- ★ Wass de Czege, Huba, "Defeating the Abu Bakr al Baghdadi Gang: A Realistic Strategy," *Small Wars Journal* [22 December 2015]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/defeating-the-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-gang-a-realistic-strategy> [accessed 11 August 2017].

This is one of the best, early, discussions on the recommended approach to ISIS. The author does not place enough emphasis on understanding the environment as he places them cleanly in a box of criminal gangs.

Waters, Nick, "Reach for the Sky: Drone Use by Sub-State Actors in Conflict," *Wavell Room: Contemporary British Military Thought* [26 October 2017].  
<https://wavellroom.com/2017/10/26/reach-for-the-sky-drone-use-by-sub-state-actors-in-conflict/> [accessed 9 July 2018].

- ★ Zimmerman, Katherine, "America Won't Win the War on Terror Until It Understands the Enemy," *National Review* [12 October 2017]. <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/452560/war-terror-america-misunderstands-enemy-needs-new-strategy> [accessed 13 October 2017].

Absolutely agree. The key is not simply understanding this as a movement, but also understanding the narrative space on which this movement actually operates.

## ISIS

Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Mardawi and Khabab al-Jizrawi. 2019. *Withdraw Your Hands from Bay'a to al-Baghdadi* or كفووا الأيادي عن بيعة البغدادي <http://www.jihadica.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/kuffu-al-ayadi.pdf> [accessed 23 November 2019].

A call from former ISIS supporters to withdraw support from the Islamic State.

Al Jazeera, "UK schoolgirl who ran away to join ISIL wants to 'come home'," *Al Jazeera News* [14 February 2019]. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/uk-schoolgirl-ran-join-isil-home-190214075858697.html> [accessed 15 February 2019].

Conflict Armament Research, "Tracing the Supply of Components Used in Islamic State IEDs: Evidence from a 20-month investigation in Iraq and Syria," London: Conflict Armament Research Ltd., February 2016. <http://www.conflictarm.com/download-file/> [accessed 20 December 2016].

This 107 page document contains high-quality data on the transference of dual-use material for IED manufacture used by ISIS.

Conflict Armament Research. *Weapons of the Islamic State: A three-year investigation in Iraq and Syria*. London: Conflict Armament Research Ltd., December 2017. [www.conflictarm.com/download-file/](http://www.conflictarm.com/download-file/) [accessed 19 June 2018].

This 202 page document contains high-quality data on the manufacture and source of weapons used by ISIS.

Hafez, Mohammed M. 2007. *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom*. Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace. [https://www.academia.edu/14096208/ISIS\\_The\\_Origins\\_of\\_the\\_Islamic\\_State](https://www.academia.edu/14096208/ISIS_The_Origins_of_the_Islamic_State) [accessed 1 September 2020].

★ Johnston, Patrick B., Jacob N. Shapiro, Howard J. Shatz, Benjamin Bahney, Danielle F. Jung, Patrick K. Ryan, and Jonathan Wallace. *Foundations of the Islamic State: Management, Money, and Terror in Iraq, 2005–2010*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2016. [http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1100/RR1192/RAND\\_RR1192.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1100/RR1192/RAND_RR1192.pdf) [accessed 15 June 2016].

Includes critical information on the earlier incarnation of ISIS. One of the most well documented source books for understanding the roots of ISIS. Necessary for context, but not great for present narrative.

Krause, Peter, "A State, an Insurgency, and a Revolution: Understanding and Defeating the Three Faces of ISIS," in *The Future of ISIS: Regional and International Implications*, Sumit Ganguly and Feisal A.R. al-Istrabadi (eds.), Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2018. [https://www.academia.edu/36917006/A\\_State\\_an\\_Insurgency\\_and\\_a\\_Revolution\\_Understanding\\_and\\_Defeating\\_the\\_Three\\_Faces\\_of\\_ISIS\\_in\\_The\\_Future\\_of\\_ISIS\\_Regional\\_and\\_International\\_Implications\\_Sumit\\_Ganguly\\_and\\_Feisal\\_A\\_R\\_al\\_Istrabadi\\_eds\\_Washington\\_D\\_C\\_Brookings\\_Institution\\_Press\\_2018](https://www.academia.edu/36917006/A_State_an_Insurgency_and_a_Revolution_Understanding_and_Defeating_the_Three_Faces_of_ISIS_in_The_Future_of_ISIS_Regional_and_International_Implications_Sumit_Ganguly_and_Feisal_A_R_al_Istrabadi_eds_Washington_D_C_Brookings_Institution_Press_2018) [accessed 22 November 2020].

Levitt, Matthew, editor. *Neither Remaining nor Expanding: The Decline of the Islamic State: Counterterrorism Lectures 2016–17*. Washington DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, July 2018. <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PolicyFocus155-CT8-6.pdf> [accessed 1 August 2018].

★ Levy, Ido. *Soldiers of End-Times: Assessing the Military Effectiveness of the Islamic State*. Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy [21 December 2021]. <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/soldiers-end-times-assessing-military-effectiveness-islamic-state> [accessed 8 January 2022].

This book will be mandatory for my students during the upcoming electives.

It has some excellent insights and wonderful data on the post-US commitment to Operation Inherent Resolve

and how ISIS performed once it was on the defensive. There are a couple of discussions of ISIS conduct on the offensive in Kobane and Ramadi, as well.

Micuda, Kelley Marie. 2017. "Combat Branding and the Islamic State: A Missing Link to Generating a Terrorist Recruit Profile." Dissertation, Fielding Graduate University.

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Robinson, Eric, Daniel Egel, Patrick B. Johnston, Sean Mann, Alexander D. Rothenberg, and David Stebbins. 2017. *When the Islamic State Comes to Town: The Economic Impact of Islamic State Governance in Iraq and Syria*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.  
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This is a report on ISIS from the University of Jordan. It is interesting because of the source more so than the information in it. The presentation of the information is a little different even if most of the source material are secondary sources.

Abstract: This paper aims to understand the driving beliefs of those who join ISIS and unpick its unique nature, answering what makes ISIS exceptional. The paper assess how ISIS survives in the face of territorial setbacks and investigates ISIS from outer and inner perspectives, employing case study approach through primary and secondary literature to provide insight into the main differences between al-Qaeda and ISIS. Further, the paper traces the history of other terrorist movements in relation to changing geopolitics, and explores ISIS's profound relationship with millennials who in it find agency and instant gratification. Due to its ideological nature, its radical belief and its virtual relationship with world-wide followers, ISIS maintains the possibility of surviving and reproducing itself in another form despite its setback and lacking territory.

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Al-Tamimi, Aymenn Jawad, translator, "Islamic State's Appointment of New Leader: Translation and Notes," aymennjawad.org [31 October 2019]. <http://www.aymennjawad.org/2019/10/islamic-state-appointment-of-new-leader> [accessed 23 November 2019].

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Al-Tamimi, Aymenn Jawad, translator, "Islamic State Advice on Coronavirus Pandemic," aymennjawad.org [12 March 2020]. <http://www.aymennjawad.org/2020/03/islamic-state-advice-on-coronavirus-pandemic> [accessed 23 March 2020].

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Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, "Twenty-fifth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2368 (2017) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities," United Nations Security Council [20 January 2020]. [https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2020/53](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2020/53) [accessed 31 January 2020].

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- ★ Bartlett, Tom, "The Road to ISIS: An unorthodox anthropologist goes face to face with ISIS. Is the payoff worth the peril?" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* [20 May 2016]. <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Scientist-Who-Talks-to/236521> [accessed 15 June 2016].

Scott Atran does some of the most significant research on extremist actors. Unlike most academics he interviews the actors face-to-face. In such meetings he gains an understanding that few have. The question of worth is whether or not his research and data can be turned into a useful theory.

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Blazakis, Jason M. "Is the threat from ISIS really more significant because of COVID-19?" *The Hill* [13 May 2020]. <https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/497261-is-the-threat-from-isis-really-more-significant-because-of-covid-19> [accessed 15 May 2020].

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Quoted from report summary: The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), like no other terrorist organization before, has used Twitter and other social media channels to broadcast its message, inspire followers, and recruit new fighters. Though much less heralded, ISIS opponents have also taken to Twitter to castigate the ISIS message. This report draws on publicly available Twitter data to examine this ongoing debate about ISIS on Arabic Twitter and to better understand the networks of ISIS supporters and opponents on Twitter.

To support the countermessaging effort and to more deeply understand ISIS supporters and opponents, this study uses a mixed-methods analytic approach to identify and characterize in detail both ISIS support and opposition networks on Twitter. This analytic approach draws on community detection algorithms that help detect interactive communities of Twitter users, lexical analysis that can identify key themes and content for large data sets, and social network analysis. This research set out to answer three key questions:

- How can we differentiate ISIS supporters and opponents on Twitter?
- Who are they, and what are they saying?
- How are they connected, and who is important?

- ★ Bourekba, Moussa, "What is so attractive about the 'Islamic State'," *Notes Internacionales CIDOB* [March 2015].  
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- ★ Bunzel, Cole, "From Paper State to Caliphate: The Ideology of the Islamic State," The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World, Analysis Paper No. 19, March 2015.

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Bunzel, Cole, "Caliph Incognito: The Ridicule of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi," *Jihadica* [14 November 2019].

<http://www.jihadica.com/caliph-incognito/> [accessed 23 November 2019].

Criticisms from former ISIS supporters of the selection of the new caliph. This article presents readers with an interesting experience. Often, Americans perceive enemies of our enemy as in possible agreement with us. This is a linear approach in the sense that there is a line that separates good guys from bad guys. If someone is in opposition to a bad guy, they are, by definition, on the good guy side of the line. This conception may be inaccurate, but the belief is simply untrue. Even if there is a good guy-bad guy line, there can be infighting that exists on either side of that line. Many opponents of ISIS hate US policy as much as ISIS does.

Burke, Jason, "Isis starting to reassert itself in Middle East heartlands, UN warns," *The Guardian* [30 January 2020].

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/30/isis-islamic-state-starting-reassert-itself-middle-east-heartlands-un-warns> [accessed 31 January 2020]

Byman, Daniel, "The Islamic State Archipelago," *Lawfare* [21 February 2016].

<https://www.lawfareblog.com/islamic-state-archipelago> [accessed 22 February 2016].

- ★ Byrne, Peter, "Anatomy of terror: What makes normal people become extremists?" *New Scientist* [16 August 2017]. <https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg23531390-700-anatomy-of-terror-what-makes-normal-people-become-extremists/> [accessed 18 January 2018].

This article is really great! I do not know how I did not read it when it was first published, but this needs to be read. It is about 5,000 words and intellectually more challenging than most products, but the author does a great job of making his material accessible and he connects the academic with the practical.

- ★ Calamuri, Krishnadev, "ISIS Never Went Away in Iraq," *The Atlantic* [31 August 2018].

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/08/iraq-isis/569047/> [accessed 3 September 2018].

Do we really understand the nature of our opponents? This article, and others, suggest that ISIS and other similar groups confuse the governments fighting them. Their size, their method, and their location. Hopefully, this article will generate questions that can lead to a proper understanding.

- ★ Callimachi, Rukmini, "A News Agency With Scoops Directly From ISIS, and a Veneer of Objectivity", *New York Times* [14 January 2016]. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/15/world/middleeast/a-news-agency-with-scoops-directly-from-isis-and-a-veneer-of-objectivity.html?ref=world&r=2> [accessed 15 January 2016].

Information on what might be referred to as the ISIS wire service – Amaq.

Callimachi, Rukmini, "With Mosul Under Siege, ISIS Leader Breaks Silence to Issue a Rallying Cry," *New York Times* [2 November 2016]. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/03/world/middleeast/islamic-state-leader-baghdadi-new-recording-mosul.html> [accessed 3 November 2016].



The Caliph urges his followers to fight hard.

- ★ Callimachi, Rukmini, "Not 'Lone Wolves' After All: How ISIS Guides World's Terror Plots From Afar," *The New York Times* [4 February 2017]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/04/world/asia/isis-messaging-app-terror-plot.html> [accessed 7 February 2017].

This is a great discussion on how individuals are recruited and directed by ISIS.

- ★ Callimachi, Rukmini, "The ISIS Files," *The New York Times* [4 April 2018]. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/04/04/world/middleeast/isis-documents-mosul-iraq.html> [accessed 6 April 2018].

Rukmini Callimachi is one of the best reporters in the main stream media on ISIS. This article is another example of her great reporting. The details in both documentation and interviews provides great insight into how ISIS governed and how they controlled the population. This is the most insightful ISIS article I have read since Graeme Wood's March 2015 article, "What ISIS Really Wants."

- ★ Callimachi, Rukmini, "The Case of the Purloined Poultry: How ISIS Prosecuted Petty Crime," *The New York Times* [1 July 2018]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/01/world/middleeast/islamic-state-iraq.html> [accessed 4 July 2018].

Rukmini Callimachi has provided some of the best reporting on ISIS over the last year. This article is another excellent example of her work. She has shown the complexity of life in the ISIS caliphate. The people living under ISIS governance were not making a choice between a Western Utopia and Mad Max Fury Road. In many ways ISIS provided greater stability and predictability for residents than did the state leadership it replaced. This is important in expressing some of what needs to be done for opponents of ISIS to provide a better alternative. It isn't enough to kill ISIS and drive them out. The new governance needs to be at least as honest and just as was the caliphate. That may sound like a low bar, but unfortunately it has proven to be harder to clear than many think. Rukmini Callimachi's reporting is critical to gaining an understanding of life in the caliphate so that current state leaders know the actual height of the bar that they have to clear.

- ★ Callimachi, Rukmini, "Caliphate," *The New York Times* [20 September 2018].

Prologue: The Mission

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-prologue-the-mission.html> [accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 1: The Reporter

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-one-the-reporter.html> [accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 2: Recruitment

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-two-recruitment.html> [accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 3: The Arrival

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-three-the-arrival.html> [accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 4: Us vs. Them

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-four-us-versus-them.html> [accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 5: The Heart

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-five-the-heart.html> [accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 6: Paper Trail

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-six-paper-trail.html> [accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 7: Mosul

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-seven-mosul.html> [accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 8: The Briefcase

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-eight-the-briefcase.html>

[accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 9: Prisoners: Part 1

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-nine-prisoners-part-one.html>

[accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 9: Prisoners: Part 2

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-nine-prisoners-part-two.html>

[accessed 7 December 2018].

Chapter 10: One Year Later

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/podcasts/caliphate-transcript-chapter-ten-one-year-later.html>

[accessed 7 December 2018].

I am a huge fan of Rukmini Callimachi. She does a fantastic job of communicating the ISIS perspective. This series explains her journey to understand ISIS and the journey of ISIS simultaneously. She explains ISIS through the figures of several people with whom she personally interacts.

This is absolutely worth listening to more so than reading, however, the collection of material is essential to consume.

There are twelve parts including the prologue and a two-part chapter nine.

- ★ Castner, Brian, "Exclusive: Tracing ISIS' Weapons Supply Chain—Back to the US," *Wired* [12 December 2017]. <https://www.wired.com/story/terror-industrial-complex-isis-munitions-supply-chain/> [accessed 13 December 2017].

I read two articles on the same topic today – the Islamic State weapons manufacturing system. Both articles, this one and the one from *The New York Times* deserve serious consideration. These articles explain yet another way in which ISIS was and is different from other terrorist or extremist groups.

Callimachi, Rukmini, "Fight to Retake Last ISIS Territory Begins," *The New York Times* [11 September 2018]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/11/world/middleeast/isis-syria.html> [accessed 13 September 2018].

Another excellent article by Rukmini Callimachi. The final assault on ISIS-held territory needs watching. It is unclear how the defeat of ISIS in this location will effect the organization.

Callimachi, Rukmini, "ISIS Spokesman Ends Silence by Calling for Retaliation Over New Zealand Massacres," *The New York Times* [18 March 2019]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/18/world/middleeast/isis-spokesman-speech.html> [accessed 19 March 2019].

- ★ Cathcart, Will, Vazha Tavberidze, and Nino Burchuladze, "ISIS's New Chechen Warlord," *The Daily Beast* [4 August 2016]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/08/04/isis-s-new-chechen-warlord.html> [accessed 4 August 2016].

Information about Chechen, or rather Georgian, leadership within ISIS. This article argues that Tamaz Batirashvili is the real thinker behind ISIS tactical success rather than his younger brother, Tarkhan Batirashvili a.k.a. Omar al-Shishani (Omar the Chechen). Tamaz has kept himself hidden from public sight and out of the media and thus this is one of the few pieces written about him.

Celso, Anthony N. "The "Caliphate" in the Digital Age: the Islamic State's Challenge to the Global Liberal Order," Department of Security Studies, Angelo State University [unknown]. [https://www.academia.edu/11083829/The\\_Caliphate\\_in\\_the\\_Digital\\_Age](https://www.academia.edu/11083829/The_Caliphate_in_the_Digital_Age) [accessed 30 September 2019].

Celso, Anthony N. "IS and the Sudanese Mahdiyyah: a Comparative Analysis of Two Apocalyptic Jihadist States," Department of Security Studies, Angelo State University [unknown]. [https://www.academia.edu/14098519/IS\\_and\\_the\\_Sudanese\\_Mahdiyyah\\_a\\_Comparative\\_Analysis\\_of\\_Two\\_Apocalyptic\\_Jihadist\\_States](https://www.academia.edu/14098519/IS_and_the_Sudanese_Mahdiyyah_a_Comparative_Analysis_of_Two_Apocalyptic_Jihadist_States) [accessed 14 October 2019].

Chalfant, Morgan, "Biden says ISIS leader killed in US raid in Syria," *The Hill* [3 February 2022]. <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/592619-biden-says-isis-leader-killed-in-us-raid-in-syria> [accessed 5 March 2022].

Chivers, C.J., "Behind the Black Flag: The Recruitment of an ISIS Killer", *New York Times* [20 December 2015]. [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/21/world/middleeast/isis-recruitment-killer-hassan-aboud.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/21/world/middleeast/isis-recruitment-killer-hassan-aboud.html?_r=1) [accessed 21 December 2015].

A brief biography of a Syrian leader within ISIS.

- ★ Chulov, Martin, "Isis: the inside story," *The Guardian* [11 December 2014]. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/11/-sp-isis-the-inside-story> [accessed 13 September 2018].

An excellent article on the origins of ISIS.

Chulov, Martin, "Isis signals business as usual, with menacing new 'frontman'", *The Guardian* [3 January 2016]. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/03/with-a-new-menacing-frontman-isis-signals-business-as-usual> [accessed 4 January 2016].

Is there a new "Jihadi John."

- ★ Chulov, Martin, "'We will get him': the long hunt for Isis leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi," *The Guardian* [15 January 2018]. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/15/long-hunt-for-isis-leader-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi> [accessed 16 January 2018].

Is al-Baghdadi important or not? This is one of the better recent articles that calls into question the value and the effort expended to get him. It causes me to reflect on the debates about killing or not killing Osama bin Laden throughout the Bush administration.

- ★ Chulov, Martin, "Isis leader believed to have fled coup attempt by his own fighters," *The Guardian* [7 February 2019]. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/feb/07/isis-leader-believed-to-have-fled-coup-attempt-by-his-own-fighters> [accessed 8 February 2019].

Fascinating insight into ISIS. Not sure how much of this is accurate, but it is useful to understand the internal fractures that have always been present in ISIS, but under this significant stress are becoming more and more critical.

- ★ Chulov, Martin, Jamie Grierson, and Jon Swaine, "Isis faces exodus of foreign fighters as its 'caliphate' crumbles," *The Guardian* [26 April 2017]. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/26/isis-exodus-foreign-fighters-caliphate-crumbles> [accessed 27 April 2017].

This is at least the third time I have read an article that promises the near demise of ISIS. They tend to come out every year. It is unclear if this prediction is more accurate than those that preceded it.

- ★ Chulov, Martin and Mohammed Rasool, "Isis founding member confirmed by spies as group's new leader," *The Guardian* [20 January 2020]. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/20/isis-leader-confirmed-amir-mohammed-abdul-rahman-al-mawli-al-salbi> [accessed 31 January 2020].

The best description and background on the new leader of ISIS. Strongly recommend reading.

The Cipher Brief, "Threat Report 2018: ISIS In the Spotlight," *The Cipher Brief* [14 May 2018]. <https://www.thecipherbrief.com/article/international/threat-report-2018-isis-spotlight> [accessed 14 May 2018].

The Cipher Brief, "The Newsletter: IS' Strategy in Iraq and Syria," *The Cipher Brief* [4 September 2018]. <https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column/soufan-center/is-strategy-in-iraq-and-syria> [accessed 6 September 2018].

Clarke, Colin P. "ISIS — From the Ground to Cyber Space," *The Cipher Brief* [18 May 2017]. <https://www.thecipherbrief.com/article/middle-east/isis-ground-cyber-space-1089> [accessed 18 May 2017].

Not a lot of new assessment, but the author does provide insight into deeper involvement in cyberspace.

Clarke, Colin P. "Expanding the ISIS Brand," *The National Interest* [17 February 2018].  
<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/expanding-the-isis-brand-24550> [accessed 20 February 2018].

Clarke, Colin P. "Predicting the Next ISIS: How and where another terrorist group could rise to fill the void left by the Islamic State." *The National Interest* [8 October 2018].  
<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/predicting-next-isis-32822> [accessed 9 October 2018].

Clarke, Colin P. "ISIS's New Plans to Get Rich and Wreak Havoc," *Foreign Policy* [10 October 2018].  
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/10/10/isiss-new-plans-to-get-rich-and-wreak-havoc/> [accessed 11 October 2018]

Clarke, Colin P. and Amarnath Amarasingam, "What ISIS Will Do After Mosul Falls," *Defense One* [6 March 2017]. <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2017/03/what-isis-will-do-after-mosul/135930/> [accessed 8 March 2017].

What will happen "when" ISIS collapses. I am yet to be convinced that it will ultimately collapse. Despite my opinion, the authors here suggest several possible scenarios in terms of the organization and the fighters currently participating. These are somewhat standard in that the predictions are that they will either go to ground, give up the jihad, or return home and continue.

- ★ Clarke, Colin P. and Charlie Winter, "The Islamic State May Be Failing, but Its Strategic Communications Legacy Is Here to Stay," *War on the Rocks* [17 August 2017].  
<https://warontherocks.com/2017/08/the-islamic-state-may-be-failing-but-its-strategic-communications-legacy-is-here-to-stay/> [accessed 19 April 2018].

Great details, fantastic quotes, and links on the importance of narrative to ISIS.

- ★ Clarke, Colin P. and Haroro J. Ingram, "Defeating the ISIS Nostalgia Narrative," *Foreign Policy Research Institute* [18 April 2018]. <https://www.fpri.org/article/2018/04/defeating-the-isis-nostalgia-narrative/> [accessed 19 April 2018].

The authors express the danger of almost defeating ISIS. They warn that this group is not defeated and that their ideology and narrative are still resonant in the region. This is one of the best articles to refute the notion that fighting ISIS or any similar group is about killing bad guys and targeting leaders.

Conflict Armament Research. "Dispatches from the Field: Islamic State Weapons in Kobane: Analysis of weapons and ammunition captured from Islamic State forces in Kobane," London: Conflict Armament Research Ltd., April 2015. [http://www.conflictarm.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Islamic\\_State\\_Weapons\\_in\\_Kobane.pdf](http://www.conflictarm.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Islamic_State_Weapons_in_Kobane.pdf) [accessed 19 June 2018].

This 34 page document contains data on the manufacture and source of weapons used by ISIS.

The Conversation, "We're just beginning to grasp the toll of ISIS' looting in Syria," *Public Radio International on MSN.com* [19 May 2019]. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/were-just-beginning-to-grasp-the-toll-of-isis-looting-in-syria/ar-AABpfZR?ocid=spartanntp#page=2> [accessed 20 May 2019].

Cottee, Simon, "How ISIS Appeals to Converts — and Ex-Criminals", *Defense One* [25 January 2016].  
<http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2016/01/how-isis-appeals-converts-and-ex-criminals/125384/> [accessed 26 January 2016].

- ★ Cottee, Simon, "ISIS Will Fail, but What About the Idea of ISIS?" *The Atlantic* [23 March 2017].  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/03/idea-of-isis-will-outlive-caliphate/520224/> [accessed 24 March 2017].

Though I believe my blog post on the website does a better job of summarizing the post-ISIS options for ISIS members, this article is still a good discussion of what happens when an ideology struggles and fails in application.

Coyne, Claire with Harleen Gambhir, "ISIS's Regional Campaign: February 2016," *Institute for the Study of War Blog* [29 February 2016]. <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/02/isiss-regional-campaign-february-2016.html> [accessed 1 March 2016].

- ★ Creswell, Robyn and Bernard Haykel, "Battle Lines: Want to understand the jihadis? Read their poetry." *The New Yorker* [8 and 15 June 2015]. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/06/08/battle-lines-jihad-creswell-and-haykel> [accessed 5 July 2018].

This article is an excellent expression of the importance of culturally linked media for developing and furthering narrative meaning.

Czapnik, Slawomir, "Circumstances of the rise of the so-called Islamic State according to Patrick Cockburn's perspective," *Scientific Journal of the Military University of Land Forces*, Volume 50, Number 2(188), Pages 5-18 [2018]. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0012.2483> [accessed 25 January 2020].

- ★ Dauber, Cori E., "ISIS and the Family Man", *Small Wars Journal* [1 July 2015]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/isis-and-the-family-man> [accessed 6 November 2015].
- ★ Day, Joel, "ISIS Allies: A News Global Threat," Paper for the Center for Terrorism and Security Studies [2 June 2016].

Probably the best discussion to this date on the nature and importance of ISIS allies and how they change the large dynamic of the fighting against similar thinking groups.

The appendix provides the best list of ISIS declared allies.

DePetris, Daniel, "No, ISIS Isn't Resurging Amid the Coronavirus Pandemic," *Defense One* [15 May 2020]. <https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2020/05/no-isis-isnt-resurging-amid-coronavirus-pandemic/165401/> [accessed 20 May 2020].

De Visser, Nadette, "ISIS Eats Its Own, Torturing and Executing Dutch Jihadists. Or Did It?" *The Daily Beast* [1 March 2016]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/03/01/isis-eats-its-own-torturing-and-executing-dutch-jihadists-or-did-it.html> [accessed 2 March 2016].

Detsch, Jack, "Islamic State adds smartphone app to its communications arsenal", *Christian Science Monitor* [3 December 2015]. <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Passcode/2015/1203/Islamic-State-adds-smartphone-app-to-its-communications-arsenal> [accessed 10 December 2015].

Discussion on technological innovation with respect to cellphone and app adaptation.

- ★ Dettmer, Jamie, "Dissent in IS Ranks; Al-Baghdadi Still in Charge?" *Voice of America* [9 August 2018]. <https://www.voanews.com/a/dissent-in-is-ranks-some-wonder-whether-al-baghdadi-in-charge/4520618.html> [accessed 11 August 2018].

These reports are fascinating. I am curious how much of this is real internal division and how much of this might be trolling. Either way this article is worth reading.

Dodwell, Brian, Daniel Milton, and Don Rassler, "The Caliphate's Global Workforce: An Inside Look at the Islamic State's Foreign Fighter Paper Trail," *Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point*, 18 April 2016. <https://ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Caliphates-Global-Workforce1.pdf> [accessed 2 October 2017].

- ★ Dodwell, Brian, Daniel Milton, and Don Rassler, "Then and Now: Comparing the Flow of Foreign Fighters to AQI and the Islamic State," *Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point*, December 2016. <https://ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Then-and-Now.pdf> [accessed 27 July 2017].

This is an excellent report in total. The data is from captured ISIS human resources documents. The best value is in the comparisons in foreign fighters from the two periods.

Duncan, Ian, "The Islamic State and its allies have killed 33,000 people, University of Maryland study finds," *The Baltimore Sun* [9 August 2016]. <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/bs-md->



[isis-death-toll-study-20160808-story.html](http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/2160808-story.html) [accessed 10 August 2016].

- ★ The Economist, “The terrorists’ vicious message is surprisingly hard to rebut”, *The Economist* [15 August 2015]. <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21660989-terrorists-vicious-message-surprisingly-hard-rebut-propaganda-war?src=scn%2Ftw%2Fte%2Fpe%2Fed%2FThePropagandaWar> [accessed 16 August 2015].

The Economist, “Islamic stateless?” *The Economist* [9 July 2016].

<http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21701721-jihadists-are-losing-their-caliphate-they-remain-deadl-islamic-stateless> [accessed 9 July 2016].

This article has it wrong, I think. They represent the contemporary trend of terrorist violence as a last gasp to become like other terrorist groups when it is who they are as they seek to remind everyone that they are still remaining and expanding.

The Economist, “Apocalypse Postponed: Islamic State’s Loss of Dabiq,” *The Economist*, 29 October 2016, 44.

A brief discussion on the importance or lack thereof of Dabiq. This also gives a brief explanation of eschatology within Islam and particularly its rise in Sunni Islam.

- ★ El Deeb, Sarah, “In last days, al-Baghdadi sought safety in shrinking domain,” *Military Times* [5 November 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2019/11/05/in-last-days-al-baghdadi-sought-safety-in-shrinking-domain/> [accessed 6 November 2019].

One of the best short articles describing the personal behavior of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. This is unverified and probably can never be verified. If true, this paints an interesting picture of the troubles within ISIS and the mental state of the group’s leader.

- ★ Engel, Richard, Ben Plesser and Tracy Connor, “American ISIS Defector: ‘I’ve Let My Nation Down,’” *NBC News* [23 May 2016]. <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-uncovered/american-isis-defector-i-ve-let-my-nation-down-n578216> [accessed 23 May 2016].

Enikolopov, Ruben, Vera Mironova, and Mohammed Hussein, “What ISIS Can Teach Policymakers,” Belfer Center, Harvard Kennedy School [before 4 November 2016].

<https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/files/what-isis-can-teach-policymakers.pdf> [accessed 13 May 2020].

The paper includes some interesting polling data on Iraqi perspectives on ISIS governance from Diyala province taken after ISIS was driven from the area by Kurdish forces.

Errico, Francesco Bergoglio, “The Road to Daesh – The History of the Takfir and its Interpretations,” *European Eye on Radicalization* [6 September 2018]. <https://eerradicalization.com/the-road-to-daesh-the-history-of-the-takfir-and-its-interpretations/> [accessed 12 September 2018].

Europol, “Changes in modus operandi of Islamic State terrorist attacks,” Europol Public Information, The Hague, Review held by experts from Member States and Europol on 29 November and 1 December 2015 [18 January 2016].

[https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/changes\\_in\\_modus\\_operandi\\_of\\_is\\_in\\_terrorist\\_attacks.pdf](https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/changes_in_modus_operandi_of_is_in_terrorist_attacks.pdf) [accessed 30 June 2016].

This report includes useful data on the group and trends analysis.

Everest65, “The Desert Insurgency: Arms of ISIS in Anbar, Iraq,” *Calibre Obscura* [24 December 2018]. <https://www.calibreobscura.com/the-desert-insurgency-arms-of-isis-in-anbar-iraq/> [accessed 25 December 2018].

Faiola, Anthony and Souad Mekhennet, “The Islamic State creates a new type of jihadist: Part terrorist, part gangster”, *Washington Post* [20 December 2015].

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/the-islamic-state-creates-a-new-type-of-jihadist-part-terrorist-part-gangster/2015/12/20/1a3d65da-9bae-11e5-aca6-1ae3be6f06d2\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/the-islamic-state-creates-a-new-type-of-jihadist-part-terrorist-part-gangster/2015/12/20/1a3d65da-9bae-11e5-aca6-1ae3be6f06d2_story.html)

[accessed 21 December 2015].

The transforming nature of jihadists in that they are combining their previous careers as criminals with their new religiously motivated terrorist efforts.

Fainberg, Alisa, "Here We Come: The Evolution of Foreign Fighters' Flow to Syria and Iraq in 2013-2016," International Institute for Counter-Terrorism [Winter 2017].

[https://www.academia.edu/31659916/The\\_Evolution\\_of\\_Foreign\\_Fighters](https://www.academia.edu/31659916/The_Evolution_of_Foreign_Fighters) [accessed 9 September 2019].

Good information on foreign fighter flow into ISIS.

- ★ Fishman, Brian, "Fourth Generation Governance: Sheikh Tamimi defends the Islamic State of Iraq," Combating Terrorism Center, 23 March 2007. [https://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/ISI-Fourth\\_Gen4.pdf](https://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/ISI-Fourth_Gen4.pdf) [accessed 6 December 2016].

This article explains the al-Tamimi paper/book "Informing the People About the Birth of the Islamic State of Iraq." This is great interpretation and explanation. In this, the author provides some discussion on how ISI is redefining the nature of governance in a modern era. Critical to a discussion on modern political science.

Fishman, Brian, "Dysfunction and Decline: Lessons Learned From Inside Al-Qa'ida in Iraq," *Harmony Project: Combating Terrorism Center at West Point* [16 March 2009].

<https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2010/06/Dysfunction-and-Divide.pdf> [accessed 25 October 2018].

- ★ Fishman, Brian, "Redefining the Islamic State: The Fall and Rise of Al-Qaeda in Iraq," New America Foundation's National Security Studies Program Policy Paper, August 2011. [https://static.newamerica.org/attachments/4343-redefining-the-islamic-state/Fishman\\_Al\\_Qaeda\\_In\\_Iraq.023ac20877a64488b2b791cd7e313955.pdf](https://static.newamerica.org/attachments/4343-redefining-the-islamic-state/Fishman_Al_Qaeda_In_Iraq.023ac20877a64488b2b791cd7e313955.pdf) [accessed 2 December 2016].

This is important in explaining the changing nature of ISI over time. The author was wrong about several assessments and predictions as has been demonstrated over the five years since publication. Still, this deserves credit for the prescience of the time. This includes several great ISI quotes and endnotes regarding ISI statements.

Frantzman, Seth J. "Mosul: The Origins and Future of Competing Agendas Over Retaking the City from ISIS," *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (Summer 2016), 10-19.

[https://www.academia.edu/28299404/Mosul\\_The\\_origins\\_and\\_future\\_of\\_competing\\_agenda\\_over\\_retaking\\_the\\_city\\_from\\_ISIS](https://www.academia.edu/28299404/Mosul_The_origins_and_future_of_competing_agenda_over_retaking_the_city_from_ISIS) [accessed 6 December 2019].

- ★ Friedman, Uri, "What Is the Islamic State Without a State?" *The Atlantic* [20 October 2016]. <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/10/islamic-state-mosul-territory/504665/> [accessed 21 October 2016].

This is mostly an interview between the author and William McCants, one of the best informed commentators on ISIS. In this interview McCants provides the best explanation of the importance or not of terrain for ISIS.

- ★ Gambhir, Harleen. *The Virtual Caliphate: ISIS's Information Warfare*. Washington DC: The Institute for the Study of War, December 2016. <http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/ISW%20The%20Virtual%20Caliphate%20Gambhir%202016.pdf> [accessed 20 December 2016].

A comprehensive discussion of the development of information operations within ISIS's overall concept of operations.

Gambrell, Jon and Zeina Karam, "Baghdadi outlines path forward for Islamic State post-caliphate," *Military Times* [1 May 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2019/05/01/baghdadi-outlines-path-forward-for-islamic-state-post-caliphate/> [accessed 2 May 2019].

- ★ Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed and Nathaniel Barr, "Neither Remaining Nor Expanding: The Islamic State's

Global Expansion Struggles,” *War on the Rocks* [23 February 2016].

<http://warontherocks.com/2016/02/neither-remaining-nor-expanding-the-islamic-states-global-expansion-struggles/> [accessed 25 February 2016].

- ★ Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed and Nathaniel Barr, “Bloody Ramadan: How The Islamic State Coordinated A Global Terrorist Campaign,” *War on the Rocks* [20 July 2016].

<http://warontherocks.com/2016/07/bloody-ramadan-how-the-islamic-state-coordinated-a-global-terrorist-campaign/> [accessed 20 July 2016].

The authors provide a useful discussion on the role of ISIS leadership during the recent Ramadan violence.

- ★ Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed, Nathaniel Barr, and Bridget Moreng, “How the Islamic State’s Propaganda Feeds into its Global Expansion Efforts,” *War on the Rocks* [28 April 2016].

<http://warontherocks.com/2016/04/how-islamic-states-propaganda-feeds-into-its-global-expansion-efforts/> [accessed 28 April 2016].

- ★ Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed and Madeleine Blackman, “ISIL’s Virtual Planners: A Critical Terrorist Innovation,” *War on the Rocks* [4 January 2017]. <https://warontherocks.com/2017/01/isils-virtual-planners-a-critical-terrorist-innovation/> [accessed 22 February 2017].

An explanation of the lone wolf phenomenon and how ISIS uses it in a directed and controlled and yet still organic manner. The best explanation of the role of technology and planning for operations.

- ★ Gebauer, Matthias and Holger Stark, “Ex-US Intelligence Chief on Islamic State's Rise: 'We Were Too Dumb'”, *Spiegel Online International* [29 November 2015].

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/former-us-intelligence-chief-discusses-development-of-is-a-1065131.html> [accessed 1 January 2016]

This is a direct and critical interview of LTG (retired) Flynn, former head of DIA, where he gives a powerful assessment of the progression of the fight against ISIS and mistakes made. The title is provocative, but so is the interview.

Geltzer, Joshua A. “Why Baghdadi Risked a Video Appearance,” *The Atlantic* [1 May 2019].

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/05/baghdadi-video-announces-rebirth-isis/588421/> [accessed 2 May 2019].

Gibbons-Neff, Thomas, “ISIS is rewriting textbooks to push its violent ideology. The U.S. once did something similar in Afghanistan.” *The Washington Post* [27 July 2016].

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2016/07/27/isis-is-rewriting-textbooks-to-push-its-violent-ideology-the-u-s-once-did-something-similar-in-afghanistan/> [accessed 28 July 2016].

Giglio, Mike and Kathy Gilsinan, “The Inconvenient Truth About ISIS,” *Defense One* [16 February 2020].

<https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2020/02/inconvenient-truth-about-isis/163141/> [accessed 18 February 2020].

Gilsinan, Kathy, “The ‘Caliphate’ Is Gone. Where’s the ‘Caliph’?” *The Atlantic* [29 March 2019].

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/03/where-isis-leader-baghdadi/586156/> [accessed 13 August 2019].

- ★ Glenn, Cameron, “Al Qaeda v ISIS: Ideology & Strategy,” The Wilson Center [28 September 2015].

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/al-qaeda-v-isis-ideology-strategy> [accessed 29 April 2016].

Hall, Richard and Gemma Fox, “Isis leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi seen in new video for first time in five years,” *Independent* [29 April 2019].

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-leader-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-video-al-furqan-latest-a8891716.html> [accessed 30 April 2019].

Hassan, Hassan, “Isis has reached new depths of depravity. But there is a brutal logic behind it,” *The Guardian* [7 February 2021].

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/08/isis-islamic-state-ideology-sharia-syria-iraq-jordan-pilot> [accessed 22 January 2021].

Hassan, Hassan, "The Sectarianism of the Islamic State: Ideological Roots and Political Context," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace [June 2016].

[https://carnegieendowment.org/files/CP\\_253\\_Hassan\\_Islamic\\_State.pdf](https://carnegieendowment.org/files/CP_253_Hassan_Islamic_State.pdf) [accessed 2 July 2020].

"Naji—whose real name is Mohammad Hasan Khalil al-Hakim—a former member of the Egyptian jihadist Islamic Group, wrote The Management of Savagery, ..."

- ★ Hassan, Hassan, "ISIS Is Ready for a Resurgence," *The Atlantic* [26 August 2018].

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/08/baghdadi-recording-iraq-syria-terrorism/568471/> [accessed 30 August 2018].

Probably the best analysis of al-Baghdadi's August 2018 recorded speech. Worth reading to get a creditable version of how ISIS may be seeing the transition currently occurring in the Middle East.

- ★ Hassan, Hassan, "Out of the Desert: ISIS's Strategy for a Long War," *Middle East Institute*, Policy Paper 2018-8 [August 2018].

[https://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Hassan\\_PP\\_final2\\_0.pdf](https://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Hassan_PP_final2_0.pdf) [accessed 12 September 2018].

Great assessment of ISIS history with predictions of ISIS lessons learned and expectations of future actions.

- ★ Heißner, Stefan, Peter R. Neumann, John Holland-McCowan, and Rajan Basra, "Caliphate in Decline: An Estimate of Islamic State's Financial Fortunes," The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR), London: Department of War Studies, King's College London, February 2017.

<http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/ICSR-Report-Caliphate-in-Degradation-An-Estimate-of-Islamic-States-Financial-Fortunes.pdf> [accessed 1 March 2017].

A relatively short and concise report on the economic performance and prospects of the Islamic State. Simply put, they believe the business model of ISIS is failing. What isn't clear is how ISIS will adapt to the radical reductions in revenue. The challenge that this report acknowledges is that any report on internal workings of ISIS is severely hampered by accurate or lack of accurate information.

- ★ Hegghammer, Thomas, "The Soft Power of Militant Jihad", *New York Times* [18 December 2015].

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/20/opinion/sunday/militant-jihads-softer-side.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/20/opinion/sunday/militant-jihads-softer-side.html?_r=0) [accessed 21 December 2015].

This is a good article about daily life in ISIS.

Heinstein, Ari, "ISIS's Fight with Al Qaeda is Making Both Stronger", *The National Interest* [7 January 2016].

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/isiss-fight-al-qaeda-making-both-stronger-14827?page=2> [accessed 7 January 2016].

Al-Qaeda is growing as well and needs to be maintained in the public consciousness.

Hendawi, Hamza, "Islamic State's Double Standards Sow Growing Disillusion", *Associated Press – Military.com* [18 January 2016].

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/01/18/islamic-state-double-standards-sow-growing-disillusion.html> [accessed 19 January 2016].

The domestic frustration with ISIS behavior very much like that of the Syrian regimes against which they said they were opposed.

Horgan, John, Mia Bloom, Chelsea Daymon, Wojciech Kaczkowski, and Hicham Tiflati, "A New Age of Terror? Older Fighters in the Caliphate," *Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point, CTC Sentinel*, May 2017, volume 10, Issue 5, pages 13-19.

[https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/CTC-Sentinel\\_Vol10Iss514.pdf](https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/CTC-Sentinel_Vol10Iss514.pdf) [accessed 18 May 2017].

Good statistical data on the increase of older (60+ year old) fighters and suicide bombers in ISIS.

- ★ Hubbard, Ben and Eric Schmitt, "ISIS, Despite Heavy Losses, Still Inspires Global Attacks," *The New York Times* [8 July 2017].

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/08/world/middleeast/isis-syria-iraq.html> [accessed 10 July 2017].

This is a summary of why the Islamic State's losses may not spell the doom of the ideology or the fight.

- ★ Hughes, Seamus, Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, and Bennett Clifford, "A New American Leader Rises in ISIS," *The Atlantic* [13 January 2018].

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/01/isis-america-hoxha/550508/> [accessed 14 January 2018].

Good recommendation. This gives insight into ISIS selection and promotion. It also helps viewers recognize the reasoning some have for joining. I watched the video referenced here. It is available through jihadology at <http://jihadology.net/2017/05/17/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-we-will-surely-guide-them-to-our-ways-wilayat-ninawa/>. The comments of the American referenced in this article begin at 9:00 into the nearly 45 minute piece. His comments are in American English.

Idahosa, Stephen Osaherumwen and Adebayo Kafilat Mutunrayo, "International Terrorism in the Middle East: ISIS as a Case Study," Student of International Relations: Global Security and Development Cooperation at the Department of Theory and History of International Relations, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (Moscow), Russia, Miklukho-Maklaya str., 10A, Moscow, Russia, 117198 [2016].  
[https://www.academia.edu/27458713/INTERNATIONAL\\_TERRORISM\\_IN\\_THE\\_MIDDLE\\_EAST\\_ISIS\\_A\\_S\\_A\\_CASE\\_STUDY](https://www.academia.edu/27458713/INTERNATIONAL_TERRORISM_IN_THE_MIDDLE_EAST_ISIS_A_S_A_CASE_STUDY) [accessed 21 October 2019].

- ★ Ignatius, David, "How ISIS Spread in the Middle East", *The Atlantic* [1 November 2015].  
<http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2015/11/how-isis-spread-middle-east/123312/> [accessed 2 November 2015].

Immenkamp, Beatrix, "ISIL/Da'esh and 'non-conventional' weapons of terror", European Parliamentary Research Service [December 2015].

- ★ Ingram, Hararo J. and Craig A. Whiteside, "The Caliph's Role in the (un)Surprising Resilience of the Islamic State," *Foreign Policy Research Institute* [25 October 2018].  
<https://www.fpri.org/article/2018/10/the-caliphs-role-in-the-unsurprising-resilience-of-the-islamic-state/> [accessed 25 October 2018].

Excellent analysis.

Leaders regularly say that we cannot kill and capture our way out of this problem (violent extremism, in general and ISIS, in specific). I agree. We should not be surprised when the problem does not go away just because we have become more effective at killing and capturing.

- ★ Islamic State. *The Revived Caliphate 1435 Hijri / 2014 CE: The Islamic State (2003-2014+)*. Islamic State, Summarized English Translation, 2014.  
<https://ia601400.us.archive.org/21/items/EbookTheRevivedCaliphate2014/Ebook-The-REVIVED-CALIPHATE-2014.pdf> [accessed 18 May 2016].

- ★ Islamic State, "Safety and Security Guidelines for Lone Wolf Mujahideen and Small Cells", Islamic State, Summarized English Translation, December 2015.  
<https://ansarukhilafah.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/safety-and-security-final.pdf> [accessed 21 January 2016].

- ★ Islamic State. *The Islamic State (2015)*. Islamic State, Summarized English Translation, 2015.  
<https://ia902704.us.archive.org/17/items/TheIslamicState2015-FullEbook/TheIslamicState2015FullEbook.pdf> [accessed 18 May 2016].

Islamic State, Editorial on-New Zealand Terrorist Attack "And why should ye not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who are ill-treated?" *Long War Journal* [11 March 2019].

<https://www.longwarjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/19-03-23-An-Naba-174-editorial-on-New-Zealand-terrorist-attack.jpg> [accessed 1 May 2019].

- ★ Ismay, John, Thomas Gibbons-Neff, and C.J. Chivers, "How ISIS Produced Its Cruel Arsenal on an Industrial Scale," *The New York Times* [10 December 2017].



<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/10/world/middleeast/isis-bombs.html> [accessed 13 December 2017].

I read two articles on the same topic today – the Islamic State weapons manufacturing system. Both articles, this one and the one from *Wired* deserve serious consideration. These articles explain yet another way in which ISIS was and is different from other terrorist or extremist groups.

Jalabi, Raya, “Isis video threatening UK claims to show Paris attackers in Syria and Iraq”, *The Guardian* [25 January 2016]. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/24/isis-video-paris-attackers-iraq-syria-david-cameron> [accessed 25 January 2016].

Joscelyn, Thomas, “US terror designations expose 3 international facilitators for Islamic State,” *Long War Journal* [10 February 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/02/us-terror-designations-expose-3-international-facilitators-for-islamic-state.php> [accessed 12 February 2018].

★ Joscelyn, Thomas, “Analysis: ISIS hasn’t been defeated,” *Long War Journal* [22 February 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/02/analysis-isis-hasnt-been-defeated.php> [accessed 23 February 2018].

Great article. This is the best summary of the current state of ISIS. Thomas Joscelyn is one of a handful of real scholars and experts on ISIS and his material is worth reading thoughtfully.

Joscelyn, Thomas, “Islamic State propagandists seek to undermine rival jihadists in Syria,” *Long War Journal* [17 April 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/04/islamic-state-propagandists-seek-to-undermine-rival-jihadists-in-syria.php> [accessed 18 April 2018].

Joscelyn, Thomas, “Analysis: Islamic State spokesman says ‘new phase’ of jihad has begun,” *Long War Journal* [24 April 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/04/analysis-islamic-state-spokesman-says-new-phase-of-jihad-has-begun.php> [accessed 23 August 2018].

Joscelyn, Thomas, “Islamic State leader downplays territorial losses in new audio message,” *Long War Journal* [22 August 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/08/islamic-state-leader-downplays-territorial-losses-in-new-audio-message.php> [accessed 23 August 2018].

Joscelyn, Thomas, “Analysis: Islamic State spokesman claims group remains a ‘reality’ despite losses,” *Long War Journal* [21 March 2019]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/03/analysis-islamic-state-spokesman-claims-group-remains-a-reality-despite-losses.php> [accessed 22 March 2019].

“Kalimāt mudī’a, Shabakat al-Burāq al-Islāmiyya” or “Transcriptions of Words and Speeches of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi,” June 2006, transcribed from audio recordings into Arabic text. <https://archive.org/download/fgfrt/1a.pdf> [accessed 29 April 2016].

★ Kan, Paul, “This is your Jihad on Drugs,” *War on the Rocks* [7 March 2016]. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/03/this-is-your-jihad-on-drugs/> [accessed 7 March 2016].

Karam, Zeina, “ISIS loses all territory, but its shadowy leader still at large,” *Military Times* [23 March 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2019/03/23/isis-loses-all-territory-but-its-shadowy-leader-still-at-large/> [accessed 25 March 2019].

★ Karmon, Ely, “The Demise of the Caliphate: Quo Vadis ISIS?” International Institute for Counter-Terrorism [19 December 2016]. [https://www.ict.org.il/Article/1878/the-demise-of-the-caliphate-quo-vadis-isis?utm\\_source=activetrail&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Karmon](https://www.ict.org.il/Article/1878/the-demise-of-the-caliphate-quo-vadis-isis?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Karmon) [accessed 24 December 2016].

I disagree with the author in the assertion that many ISIS fighters will go to Jabhat Fatah al-Sham. I believe some will, but most of the core will remain with ISIS in hiding. Regardless of the disagreement, this article does provide a good summary of how the post-Mosul/Raqaa ISIS may evolve.

Katz, Rita, “When ISIS Hackers Call You Out By Name,” *Motherboard Vice* [14 June 2016]. <http://motherboard.vice.com/read/when-isis-calls-you-out-by-name> [accessed 15 June 2016].

Kaválek, Tomáš, "From al-Qaeda in Iraq to Islamic State: The Story of Insurgency in Iraq and Syria in 2003-2015," *Alternatives*. Turkish Journal of International Relations, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 2015. [https://www.academia.edu/34380011/From\\_al-Qaeda\\_in\\_Iraq\\_to\\_Islamic\\_State\\_The\\_Story\\_of\\_Insurgency\\_in\\_Iraq\\_and\\_Syria\\_in\\_2003-2015](https://www.academia.edu/34380011/From_al-Qaeda_in_Iraq_to_Islamic_State_The_Story_of_Insurgency_in_Iraq_and_Syria_in_2003-2015) [accessed 30 September 2019].

Kavanaugh, Shane Dixon, "ISIS Deserters Bemoan Excessive Brutality, Lack Of Creature Comforts," *Vocativ* [21 September 2015]. <http://www.vocativ.com/news/233246/isis-deserters-bemoan-excessive-brutality-lack-of-creature-comforts/> [accessed 27 June 2016].

Kavanaugh, Shane Dixon, "ISIS' Bulging Cash Cow: Shakedowns, Not Oil And Artifacts," *Vocativ* [7 October 2015]. <http://www.vocativ.com/news/237919/isis-bulging-cash-cow-shakedowns-not-oil-and-artifacts> [accessed 8 October 2015].

Good facts and graphics on ISIS economy.

Kavanaugh, Shane Dixon, "ISIS Cuts Fighters' Salaries In Half As Group Suffers Crippling Blows", *Vocativ* [18 January 2016]. Document translation available at <http://www.aymennjawad.org/2016/01/archive-of-islamic-state-administrative-documents-1> [accessed 19 January 2016]. <http://www.vocativ.com/news/272430/isis-cuts-fighters-salaries-in-half-as-group-suffers-crippling-blows/> [accessed 19 January 2016].

The reduction in pay is a critical sign of the impact of the recent targeting on the cash reserves of the organization. How much this affects ISIS is determined by how much truth there is in the assertions that those fighting for the group are only fighting for the money.

Kavanaugh, Shane Dixon and Gilad Shiloach, "Under Mounting Pressure, ISIS Resorts To Suicide Attacks", *Vocativ* [4 February 2016]. <http://www.vocativ.com/news/279369/under-mounting-pressure-isis-resorts-to-suicide-attacks> [accessed 5 February 2016].

Kavanaugh, Shane Dixon, "ISIS Might Not Be So Broke After All," *Vocativ* [9 June 2016]. <http://www.vocativ.com/327185/isis-might-not-be-so-broke-after-all/> [accessed 10 June 2016].

- ★ Keating, Joshua, "ISIS's End-of-the-World Problem," *Slate.com* [13 September 2017]. [http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future\\_tense/2017/09/isis\\_s\\_apocalyptic\\_prophecies\\_are\\_taking\\_shape.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2017/09/isis_s_apocalyptic_prophecies_are_taking_shape.html) [accessed 14 September 2017].

The author provides an excellent summary of issues associated with failed apocalyptic prophecies of ISIS. The one point not fully raised in the article is that to a true believer these prophecies have not failed – they just have not yet been realized. There is a profound difference. Unlike most of the groups that are used as examples in the article, ISIS did not give a date for events to happen nor did ISIS name a specific person to a specific date- or event-connected title or position. ISIS references to Dabiq and the battle to happen there were not essential to the group's narrative. For that true believer, the battle will still happen. The prophecies still support the fact that the Roman-Crusaders will arrive and occupy Dabiq first and then the army of the righteous will arrive to fight them. It could still happen this way. These points are important for readers to understand when appreciating the resonance and attachment of the ISIS narrative for true believers.

Kilcullen, David, "The deadly efficiency of Isis and how it grew on the global stage," *The Guardian* [11 March 2017]. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/12/the-deadly-efficiency-of-isis-and-how-it-grew-on-the-global-stage> [accessed 27 July 2017].

King, Laura, Nabih Bulos and W.J. Hennigan, "Why Islamic State's Abu Muhammad Adnani was much more than a spokesman," *The Los Angeles Times* [1 September 2016]. <http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-islamic-state-spokesman-killed-20160830-snap-story.html> [accessed 1 September 2016].

This article provides some background information on al-Adnani.

- ★ Kirdar, M. J. "Al-Qaeda in Iraq," Center for Strategic & International Studies: al-Qaeda and Affiliated

Movements Project Case Study Series, Case Study Number 1, June 2011.

[http://csis.org/files/publication/110614\\_Kirdar\\_AlQaedatIraaq\\_Web.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/110614_Kirdar_AlQaedatIraaq_Web.pdf) [accessed 29 April 2016].

Knights, Michael and Alexander Mello, "The Cult of the Offensive: The Islamic State on Defense," *CTC Sentinel*, April 2015, Volume 8, Issue 4, pages 1-7. <https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/CTCSentinel-Vol8Issue43.pdf> [accessed 11 June 2020].

Knights, Michael and Alexander Mello, "Losing Mosul, Regenerating in Diyala: How the Islamic State Could Exploit Iraq's Sectarian Tinderbox," *CTC Sentinel*, October 2016, Volume 9, Issue 10, pages 1-7. [https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/CTC-SENTINEL\\_Vol9Iss109.pdf](https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/CTC-SENTINEL_Vol9Iss109.pdf) [accessed 11 June 2020].

Knights, Michael and Alexander Mello, "Defeat by Annihilation: Mobility and Attrition in the Islamic State's Defense of Mosul," *CTC Sentinel*, April 2017, Volume 10, Issue 4, pages 1-7. [https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/CTC-Sentinel\\_Vol10Iss43.pdf](https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/CTC-Sentinel_Vol10Iss43.pdf) [accessed 11 June 2020].

Landay, Jonathan, "Exclusive: Seized documents reveal Islamic State's Department of 'War Spoils'", *Reuters* [28 December 2015]. <http://www.reuters.com/article/usa-islamic-state-documents-group-idUSKBN0UB0BI20151228> [accessed 28 December 2015].

Information on the bureaucratic nature of the Islamic State. In this article a reader can get the sense of how out of touch the US administration is as they seemed surprised that ISIS is seeking to actually create a state system. The best element of the article is that as early as October 2014 they had legal support for the enslavement of captured prisoners.

Landay, Jonathan, "New U.S. intelligence report says Islamic State weaker", *Reuters* [4 February 2016]. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-fighters-idUSKCN0VD2ZO> [accessed 5 February 2016].

Laub, Zachary and Jonathan Masters, "The Islamic State," Council of Foreign Relations [updated 22 March 2016]. [http://www.cfr.org/iraq/islamic-state/p14811?cid=nlc-dailybrief-daily\\_news\\_brief--link23-20160428&sp\\_mid=51256213&sp\\_rid=amNhcniAa2MucnluY29tS0](http://www.cfr.org/iraq/islamic-state/p14811?cid=nlc-dailybrief-daily_news_brief--link23-20160428&sp_mid=51256213&sp_rid=amNhcniAa2MucnluY29tS0) [accessed 29 April 2016].

Ligon, Gina S., Michael Logan, Margeret Hall, Douglas C. Derrick, Julia Fuller, and Sam Church, "The Jihadi Industry: Assessing the Organizational, Leadership, and Cyber Profiles," Final report prepared for the Department of Homeland Science and Technology Directorate's Office of University Programs. College Park, MD: START, July 2017.

- ★ Lister, Charles, "Profiling the Islamic State," Brookings Doha Center Analysis Paper, Number 13, November 2014. [https://www.academia.edu/16262691/Charles\\_Lister\\_BB\\_DDDD\\_CCCCCC\\_AAAA\\_P\\_Proling\\_the\\_Islamic\\_State?pls=RWLS7NgoYX](https://www.academia.edu/16262691/Charles_Lister_BB_DDDD_CCCCCC_AAAA_P_Proling_the_Islamic_State?pls=RWLS7NgoYX) [accessed 6 November 2021].

This paper provides some interesting insight in the first few months following the taking of Mosul and the declaration of the Caliphate.

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The Greek mythological metaphor is useful in seeing ISIS as an organization and movement pursuing something beyond the realm of possibility. This paper focuses primarily on the impact of this pursuit of an agenda in South Asia rather than in the traditionally described Middle East and the core of the current geographic limits of the Caliphate.

Great list of groups having declared allegiance or support to ISIS in Appendix A.

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For all those who think ISIS is yesterday's news, I strongly want to point to two things. One, look at recent ISIS success in Mali and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa. ISIS has not gone away just because it isn't on your home page when you open your internet browser. Two, a lot of people thought that Hamas had quieted down until three days ago. These groups are led by and filled with true believers who may go quiet for a while, but they haven't stopped believing or lessened their commitment to those beliefs.

Thank you Ajit Maan, Ph.D. and Suha Hassen for writing this article.

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The Soufan Center, "Intelbrief: The Challenging Math of Islamic State Fighters," *The Soufan Center* [16 August 2018]. <http://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-the-challenging-math-of-islamic-state-fighters/> [accessed 20 August 2018].

The Soufan Center, "Intelbrief: The Islamic State's Enduring Narrative," *The Soufan Center* [11 September 2018]. <http://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-the-islamic-states-enduring-narrative/> [accessed 12 September 2018].

The Soufan Center, "Intelbrief: The Islamic State Will Live on Through Its Affiliates," *The Soufan Center* [19 February 2019]. <https://mailchi.mp/thesoufancenter/the-islamic-state-will-live-on-through-its-affiliates?e=78b7a4ca58> [accessed 22 February 2019].

The Soufan Center, "Intelbrief: Don't Call It A Comeback: The Staying Power of the Islamic State," *The Soufan Center* [12 August 2019]. <https://mailchi.mp/thesoufancenter/dont-call-it-a-comeback-the-staying-power-of-the-islamic-state?e=78b7a4ca58> [accessed 13 August 2019].

Speckhard, Anne, "Recruiting from Beyond the Grave: A European Follows Anwar al-Awlaki Into ISIS," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [28 April 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/recruiting-from-beyond-the-grave-a-european-follows-anwar-al-awlaki-into-isis/> [accessed 6 May 2020].

- ★ Speckhard, Anne, "Inside The ISIS Machine Turning Children to 'Monsters'," *The Daily Beast* [25 August 2017]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/inside-the-isis-machine-turning-children-to-monsters> [accessed 27 August 2017].

The best article explaining the use of children to perpetuate the ideology.

Speckhard, Anne, "PERSPECTIVE: An ISIS Bride on the Run," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [22 October 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/perspective-an-isis-bride-on-the-run/> [accessed 23 October 2019].

Speckhard, Anne, "British-Born Jack Letts Discusses Mental Illness and His Path to ISIS," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [25 November 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/british-born-jack-letts-discusses-mental-illness-and-his-path-to-isis/> [accessed 5 December 2019].

Speckhard, Anne, "PERSPECTIVE: Ireland's Lisa Smith Is a Test Run on Repatriation of ISIS Women," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [14 January 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/perspective-irelands-lisa-smith-is-a-test-run-on-repatriation-of-isis-women/> [accessed 17 January 2020].

Best Paragraph.

Yet women who traveled to and joined ISIS were not for the most part simply victims of the men they traveled with, much as some security services like to "zombify" women by removing any sense of personal agency to their actions when it concerns ISIS. Most women were involved in their partner's decision to travel, endorsed it and willingly went to join the group. In ICSVE's 220 in-depth interviews of ISIS returnees, defectors and prisoners, collected as part of the ICSVE's Breaking the ISIS Brand Counter Narrative Project, only three foreign fighter women were coerced, tricked or unaware of where they were traveling. Of course, many did not understand that ISIS was not going to deliver the utopian Islamic living they were promised and as ISIS tried to portray in their recruitment propaganda.

Speckhard, Anne, "Kimberly Pullman: A Canadian Woman Lured Over the Internet to the ISIS Caliphate," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [31 March 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/kimberly-pullman-a-canadian-woman-lured-over-the-internet-to-the-isis-caliphate/> [accessed 6 May 2020].

- ★ Speckhard, Anne and Ahmet Yayla, "Making a Monster: How I Became an ISIS Bride," *The Daily Beast* [31 August 2017]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/bride-of-isis-the-making-of-a-monsterpart-i> [accessed 1 September 2017].
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This is a two part set of articles based on an interview with an ISIS female member. This is yet another good discussion of the transformative effect of association with ISIS on a young woman from the people at the International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism (ICSVE). In this set of articles one can get a sense of



the commitment that is rarely expressed from those who have left the ISIS territory.

- ★ Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "Beware the Women of ISIS: There Are Many, and They May Be More Dangerous Than the Men" *The Daily Beast* [21 August 2017]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/beware-the-women-of-isis-there-are-many-and-they-may-be-more-dangerous-than-the-men> [accessed 22 August 2017].

The best article explaining the various roles of women in the caliphate.

- ★ Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "Wanted Dead or Alive: The Frustrating, Failing Hunt for ISIS Leader Baghdadi," *The Daily Beast* [6 January 2018]. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-frustrating-hunt-for-mr-isis-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-the-caliph-must-be-captured-or-die> [accessed 9 January 2018].

This is a fabulous article providing a good summary of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's life and significance to ISIS. The article raises several key issues including the importance of the caliph, the strength of the ideological utopian vision, the resiliency of ISIS, and the problem with coalition mathematics. With regard to the last point, the standard number for ISIS fighters seems to have been 30,000. That number has been pretty consistent throughout the fighting regardless of reported inflicted casualties. In this article, the authors say that 6,000-20,000 ISIS fighters having melted into the Iraqi and Syrian populations. The spread and the sheer size of the numbers communicate the ignorance that we still have with respect to this fight.

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci. "Is ISIS Still Alive and Well on the Internet?" *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [January 14, 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/is-isis-still-alive-and-well-on-the-internet/> [accessed 20 January 2019].

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci. "ISIS Smuggler: Sleeper Cells and 'Undead' Suicide Bombers Have Infiltrated Europe." *The Daily Beast* [February 5, 2019]. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/isis-smuggler-sleeper-cells-and-undead-suicide-bombers-have-infiltrated-europe> [accessed 5 February 2019].

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci. "Terrorists' Use of Drones Promises to Extend Beyond Caliphate Battles," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [5 March 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/terrorists-use-of-drones-promises-to-extend-beyond-caliphate-battles/> [accessed 6 March 2019].

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci. "ISIS Chemical-Weapons Expert Speaks," *The Daily Beast* [11 March 2019]. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/isis-chemical-weapons-expert-speaks-in-exclusive-interview> [accessed 12 March 2019].

- ★ Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci. "The ISIS Ambassador to Turkey," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [18 March 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/the-isis-ambassador-to-turkey/> [accessed 18 March 2019].

Very interesting. The discussion provided by Abu Mansour is circuitous, but fascinating as he reveals the complexities in the relationship between ISIS and Turkey. Note other articles on the neo-Ottoman nature of the Erdogan government.

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci. "OPINION: What More Than 150 Members Of ISIS Taught Us About Water Security," *The Daily Caller* [17 April 2019]. <https://dailycaller.com/2019/04/17/speckhard-shajkovci-isis-water/> [accessed 22 April 2019].

- ★ Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci. "American-Born Hoda Muthana Tells All About Joining ISIS and Escaping the Caliphate," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [23 April 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/american-born-hoda-muthana-tells-all-about-joining-isis-and-escaping-the-caliphate/> [accessed 7 May 2019].

This is another great and long interview. Here we read about the recruitment and life of a woman who travels from the US to Syria to be in the Caliphate. The story needs to be taken with a grain of salt as she almost

certainly is avoiding giving all of the details, however, this is one of the most detailed descriptions of life in ISIS territory.

- ★ Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci. "A Caliphate Resident or Monster Made in Syria? Accused 'Beagle' Alexandra Kotey Speaks," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [29 April 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/a-beagle-wayward-isis-fan-or-a-monster-made-in-syria-alexandra-kotey-speaks/> [accessed 1 May 2019].

Fascinating interview. This provides excellent insight into the thinking, recruiting, and reasoning of an alleged ISIS member. This is long, but I believe well worth the reading.

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci. "Real Voices from the Caliphate Talk Back to Abu Bakr al Baghdadi," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [7 May 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/real-voices-from-the-caliphate-talk-back-to-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi/> [accessed 9 May 2019].

- ★ Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg. "Is Internet Recruitment Enough to Seduce a Vulnerable Individual into Terrorism?" *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [15 April 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/is-internet-recruitment-enough-to-seduce-a-vulnerable-individual-into-terrorism/> [accessed 6 May 2020].

This is a summary of a larger study published by these two authors. The best data on ISIS member reasons for involvement.

I previously posted the full report by Anne Speckhard, Ph.D. and Molly Ellenberg; however, this abbreviated version is also excellent and the two serve as the best expressions of why people joined ISIS.

Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg. "How Assad's Atrocities Became a Powerful Motivator for Terrorist Recruitment," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [12 May 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/how-assads-atrocities-became-a-powerful-motivator-for-terrorist-recruitment/> [accessed 15 May 2020].

A continuation of the previous material and study by these authors with specific focus on the role of Syria.

Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg. "The Effects of Assad's Atrocities and the Call to Foreign Fighters to Come to Syria on the Rise and Fall of the ISIS Caliphate," *Taylor & Francis in Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* [To be published here] [18 October 2020]. Currently at <https://www.icsve.org/the-effects-of-assads-atrocities-and-the-call-to-foreign-fighters-to-come-to-syria-on-the-rise-and-fall-of-the-isis-caliphate/> [accessed 21 October 2020].

Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg. "PERSPECTIVE: Who Is Accused ISIS Propagandist Mohammed Khalifa?" *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [11 October 2021]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/perspective-who-is-accused-isis-propagandist-mohammed-khalifa/> [accessed 7 November 2021].

This is the story about the arrest and trial of a Canadian ISIS member who served as one of the key voices in ISIS video productions.

Sperry, Paul, "Meet the American women who are flocking to join ISIS," *The New York Post* [13 May 2017]. <http://nypost.com/2017/05/13/meet-the-western-women-who-are-flocking-to-join-isis/> [accessed 14 May 2017].

Useful understanding of women leaving to go join ISIS. Most of the information is rather old. Not sure if the data reflects a new trend or not.

Sullivan, Kevin, "Life in the 'Islamic State': Women: 'Till martyrdom do us part'," *The Washington Post* [1 October 2015]. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/life-in-the-islamic-state/2015/10/01/women/> [accessed 6 October 2015].

Swanson, Ana, "12 ways ISIS gets funding", *World Economic Forum* [23 November 2015].

<http://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/11/12-ways-isis-gets-funding/> [accessed 3 February 2016].

Syria Justice and Accountability Center, "Judge, Jury and Executioner: The ISIS Bureau of Justice and Grievances," Syria Justice and Accountability Center [14 January 2020].

<https://syriaaccountability.org/wp-content/uploads/2020.01.14 ISIS EN PDF.pdf> [accessed 22 January 2020].

Taneja, Kabir, "Understanding ISIS: From Conception to Operations," *Observer Research Foundation Occasional Paper 121* [August 2017].

[https://www.academia.edu/35090816/Understanding ISIS From Conception to Operations](https://www.academia.edu/35090816/Understanding_ISIS_From_Conception_to_Operations) [accessed 18 September 2019].

The paper looks like it can provide a great summary of ISIS leadership and operations.

Tara, John, "Everything We Know About ISIS Spy Chief Abu Mohammad al-Adnani," *Time* [4 August 2016]. <http://time.com/4438388/abu-mohammad-al-adnani-isis-emni-profile/> [accessed 5 August 2016].

Tahir, Tariq, "New ISIS leader named as ex-Saddam henchman 'The Professor' Abdullah Qardash after Baghdadi killed in US raid," *The Sun* [27 October 2019].

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/10224942/new-isis-leader-abdullah-qardash-baghdadi/> [accessed 6 November 2019].

★ Tarabay, Jamie, "To It's Citizens, ISIS Shows A Softer Side: A Vocative analysis of the group's propaganda finds it wants to be loved as well as feared in its own territory," *Vocative* [March 20, 2015].

<http://www.vocativ.com/world/isis-2/to-its-citizens-isis-also-shows-a-softer-side/> [accessed 14 September 2015].

Tomiuc, Eugen, "Q&A: Islamic State Has 'Metastasized,' Says Pulitzer Prize-Winner Joby Warrick," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* [10 July 2016]. <http://www.rferl.org/content/qa-islamic-state-metastisized-pulitzer-winner-warrick/27850260.html> [accessed 11 July 2016].

Tønnessen, Truls Hallberg, "Heirs of Zarqawi or Saddam? The relationship between al-Qaida in Iraq and the Islamic State," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Volume 9, Issue 4, August 2015, 48-60.

[https://www.academia.edu/27774119/Heirs of Zargawi or Saddam The relationship between a l-Qaida in Iraq and the Islamic State?email work card=title](https://www.academia.edu/27774119/Heirs_of_Zargawi_or_Saddam_The_relationship_between_a_l-Qaida_in_Iraq_and_the_Islamic_State?email_work_card=title) [accessed 15 October 2019].

Great information on leadership and relationships of key ISIS members.

★ Tucker, Patrick, "Why Do People Join ISIS? Here's What They Say When You Ask Them", *Defense One* [8 December 2015]. <http://www.defenseone.com/threats/2015/12/why-do-people-join-isis-heres-what-they-say-when-you-ask-them/124295/?oref=d-mostread> [accessed 10 December 2015].

This gives reference to a report, referenced elsewhere in this bibliography, that includes interviews from 49 former members of ISIS and evaluates why they joined.

Ullah, Areeb, "Who is he? Experts question the identity of new Islamic State leader," *Middle East Eye* [2 November 2019]. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/who-he-experts-question-identity-new-leader> [accessed 23 November 2019].

United States Department of Treasury, "Treasury Designates Key Nodes of ISIS's Financial Network Stretching Across the Middle East, Europe, and East Africa," *Small Wars Journal* [15 April 2019].

<https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/treasury-designates-key-nodes-isis-financial-network-stretching-across-middle-east-europe> [accessed 19 April 2019].

Valensi, Carmit, "The Weakening of the Islamic State: Have the Mighty Fallen?" *The Institute for National Security Studies*, INSS Insight No 905, 14 March 2017.

[http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/No.%20905%20-%20Valensi%20on%20Islamic%20State\\_website.pdf](http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/No.%20905%20-%20Valensi%20on%20Islamic%20State_website.pdf) [accessed 16 March 2017].

Simple assessment that advises not to overestimate the strength of ISIS nor to overestimate its decline.

Essentially, ISIS was never as strong, as successful, or as rich as stated. It also isn't as weak and vulnerable as presently characterized. Good advice throughout the short piece.

Vessels, Robert, "Between the Wolf and the Crocodile: The Pragmatic Currents of the Islamic State," Middle Eastern Studies Thesis, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Peter Bartu, University of California, Berkeley [Spring 2015].

[https://www.academia.edu/13006459/Between\\_the\\_Wolf\\_and\\_the\\_Crocodile\\_The\\_Pragmatic\\_Currents\\_of\\_the\\_Islamic\\_State](https://www.academia.edu/13006459/Between_the_Wolf_and_the_Crocodile_The_Pragmatic_Currents_of_the_Islamic_State) [accessed 13 February 2021].

Von Hein, Matthias, "'Islamic State' using water as a weapon," *Deutsche Welle* [3 March 2016].

<http://www.dw.com/en/islamic-state-using-water-as-a-weapon/a-19093081> [accessed 6 March 2016].

Wallace, Brandon and Jennifer Cafarella, "ISIS's Second Resurgence," *Institute for the Study of War* [2 October 2018]. <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/10/isiss-second-resurgence.html> [accessed 7 November 2018].

- ★ Warrick, Joby, "Exclusive: Iraqi scientist says he helped ISIS make chemical weapons," *The Washington Post* [21 January 2019]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/exclusive-iraqi-scientist-says-he-helped-isis-make-chemical-weapons/2019/01/21/617cb8f0-0d35-11e9-831f-3aa2c2be4cbd\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/exclusive-iraqi-scientist-says-he-helped-isis-make-chemical-weapons/2019/01/21/617cb8f0-0d35-11e9-831f-3aa2c2be4cbd_story.html) [accessed 22 January 2019].

An excellent discussion on the development of chemical weapons within ISIS controlled Mosul.

Warrick, Joby, "Before becoming a terrorist leader, ISIS chief was a prison informer in Iraq for U.S., records show," *The Washington Post* [7 April 2021]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/isis-leader-us-informant/2021/04/07/354133d4-97d4-11eb-962b-78c1d8228819\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/isis-leader-us-informant/2021/04/07/354133d4-97d4-11eb-962b-78c1d8228819_story.html) [accessed 31 May 2021].

- ★ Warrick, Joby and Souad Mekhennet, "Inside ISIS: Quietly preparing for the loss of the 'caliphate'," *The Washington Post* [12 July 2016]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/inside-isis-quietly-preparing-for-the-loss-of-the-caliphate/2016/07/12/9a1a8a02-454b-11e6-8856-f26de2537a9d\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/inside-isis-quietly-preparing-for-the-loss-of-the-caliphate/2016/07/12/9a1a8a02-454b-11e6-8856-f26de2537a9d_story.html) [accessed 13 July 2016].

Useful support to the assertion that ISIS is not all about terrain or a linear set of possibilities. They are everywhere and therefore they can lose somewhere.

- ★ Watts, Clint, "What Paris Taught Us About the Islamic State", *War on the Rocks* [16 November 2015]. <http://warontherocks.com/2015/11/what-paris-taught-us-about-the-islamic-state/> [accessed 16 November 2015].
- ★ Watts, Clint, "When The Caliphate Crumbles: The Future of the Islamic State's Affiliates," *War on the Rocks* [13 June 2016]. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/06/when-the-caliphate-crumbles-the-future-of-the-islamic-states-affiliates/> [accessed 14 June 2016].

A quality, detailed discussion on the status and likelihood of survival of the various ISIS affiliates if/when the Caliphate crumbles.

- ★ Weaver, Mary Anne, "The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi: How a video-store clerk and small-time crook reinvented himself as America's nemesis in Iraq," *The Atlantic*, July/August 2006 Issue [8 June 2006]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/07/the-short-violent-life-of-abu-musab-al-zarqawi/304983/> [accessed 9 March 2020].

This is one of the earliest detailed discussions of the background for Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

- ★ Weiss, Michael, "Confessions of an ISIS Spy: Part One: An Appointment in Istanbul", *The Daily Beast* [15 November 2015]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/11/15/confessions-of-an-isis-spy.html> [accessed 16 November 2015].
- ★ Weiss, Michael, "Confessions of an ISIS Spy: Part Two: How ISIS Picks Its Suicide Bombers", *The Daily Beast* [16 November 2015]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/11/16/how-isis-picks-its->

[suicide-bombers.html?via=twitter\\_page](#) [accessed 17 November 2015].

- ★ Weiss, Michael, "Confessions of an ISIS Spy: Part Three: Ministries of Fear", *The Daily Beast* [17 November 2015]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/11/17/inside-isis-torture-brigades.html> [accessed 22 November 2015].
- ★ Weiss, Michael, "Confessions of an ISIS Spy: Part Four: Escaping the Islamic State", *The Daily Beast* [18 November 2015]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/11/18/how-i-escaped-from-isis.html> [accessed 22 November 2015].

Weiss, Michael, "Inside the Head of an ISIS True Believer," *The Daily Beast* [29 August 2016]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/08/29/inside-the-head-of-an-isis-true-believer.html> [accessed 29 August 2016].

Weiss, Michael, "Leaked ISIS Documents Show Internal Chaos," *The Daily Beast* [30 August 2016]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/08/30/leaked-isis-documents-show-internal-chaos.html> [accessed 30 August 2016].

- ★ Whiteside, Craig, "The Islamic State and the Return of Revolutionary Warfare," *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 27:5, 743-776 [5 August 2016]. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2016.1208287> [accessed 14 October 2016].

The author explains the progression of ISIS through the lens of revolutionary warfare. This provides excellent resources for explaining maneuver in the narrative space and especially the means of engagement used to turn tribes toward ISIS.

- ★ Whiteside, Craig, "New Masters of Revolutionary Warfare: The Islamic State Movement (2002-2016)," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Volume 10, Issue 4, August 2016. <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/523/html> [accessed 14 October 2016].

The author explains the progression of ISIS through the lens of revolutionary warfare. This is a shorter version with similar ideas as the above example.

- ★ Whiteside, Craig, "A Pedigree of Terror: The Myth of the Ba'athist Influence in the Islamic State Movement," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Volume 11, Issue 3, 2017. <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/605/html> [accessed 19 April 2018].

This is a critical article for understanding the role of Saddam loyalists in influencing, or not, ISIS.

- ★ Winter, Charlie, "The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy," *Quilliam Foundation* [July 2015]. <https://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/the-virtual-caliphate-understanding-islamic-states-propaganda-strategy.pdf> [accessed 27 September 2016].

This is the article with respect to the concept of a virtual caliphate. This includes concepts included in the ISIS narrative.

Winter, Charlie, "How the Islamic State Is Spinning the Mosul Battle," *The Atlantic* [20 October 2016]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/10/isis-mosul-propaganda-iraq-kurds-peshmerga/504854/> [accessed 19 April 2018].

- ★ Winter, Charlie, "Inside the collapse of Islamic State's propaganda machine," *Wired* [20 December 2017]. <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/isis-islamic-state-propaganda-content-strategy> [accessed 19 April 2018].

The article includes excellent supporting statistics and analysis of the decline in concepts included in the ISIS narrative.

- ★ Winter, Charlie, "How ISIS Survives the Fall of Mosul," *The Atlantic* [3 July 2017]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/07/mosul-isis-propaganda/532533/>



[accessed 19 April 2018].

The author asserts that the loss of Mosul was part of the ISIS plan all along – to antagonize the world such that it could dominate the jihadist narrative.

- ★ Winter, Charlie and Haroro J. Ingram, "Terror, Online and Off: Recent Trends in Islamic State Propaganda Operations," *War on the Rocks* [2 March 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/03/terror-online-and-off-recent-trends-in-islamic-state-propaganda-operations/y> [accessed 19 April 2018].

Great hard data and quality analysis on the decline of ISIS online material.

- ★ Winter, Charlie and Jade Parker, "Virtual Caliphate Rebooted: The Islamic State's Evolving Online Strategy," *Lawfare* [7 January 2018]. <https://www.lawfareblog.com/virtual-caliphate-rebooted-islamic-states-evolving-online-strategy> [accessed 19 April 2018].

The article explains how the online presence of the Islamic State has changed and is changing to accommodate an adjusted emphasis on attacks abroad.

Wood, Graeme, "ISIL: Who's Calling the Shots?" *Politico* [14 November 2015].

<http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/11/isil-whos-calling-the-shots-213360> [accessed 16 November 2015].

- ★ Wood, Graeme, "What ISIS Really Wants," *AP/The Atlantic* [March 2015]. <http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2015/02/what-isis-really-wants/384980/> [accessed 18 February 2015].

- ★ Wood, Graeme, "The American Climbing the Ranks of ISIS," *The Atlantic* [March 2017]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/03/the-american-leader-in-the-islamic-state/510872/> [accessed 14 January 2017].

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Garland, Chad, "Islamic State's 'very own Jabba the Hutt' captured in Mosul," *Stars & Stripes* [17 January 2020]. <https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/islamic-state-s-very-own-jabba-the-hutt-captured-in-mosul-1.615184> [accessed 22 January 2020].

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George, Susannah, "Iraqi victories remain fragile as US reduces troops," *Military Times* [18 February

2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2018/02/18/iraqi-victories-remain-fragile-as-us-reduces-troops/> [accessed 20 February 2018].

- ★ George, Susannah and Lori Hinnant, "Few ready to pay to rebuild Iraq after Islamic State group defeat," *Military Times* [28 December 2017]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2017/12/28/few-ready-to-pay-to-rebuild-iraq-after-islamic-state-group-defeat/> [accessed 2 January 2018].

One cannot defeat a hydra without healing the wounds caused. This is demonstrated both through mythology and Captain America movies. This article expresses the challenges associated with healing the wounds in Iraq. Many of the problems are related to the Government of Iraq, but some are also related to the international community and how it views contemporary conflict. War is more about influence than violence. Hopefully we will understand this or else the wreckage of Iraq will be the incubator for the next global enemy.

- ★ Gharizi, Osama and Haidar al-Ibrahim, "Baghdad Must Seize the Chance to Work with Iraq's Tribes," *War on the Rocks* [17 January 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/01/baghdad-must-seize-chance-work-iraqs-tribes/> [accessed 18 January 2018].

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Gordon, Michael R. "In a Desperate Syrian City, a Test of Trump's Policies," *The New York Times* [1 July 2017]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/01/world/middleeast/syria-raqqa-tabqa.html> [accessed 3 July 2017].

Details on Tabqa about two months after the fighting ended. This provides interesting information on the rebuilding or "healing" effort and how much the US is providing and what it is currently saying that it won't provide.

Gould, Joe, "Trump demands Europe take ISIS prisoners, America's latest ask in Syria," *Defense News* [17 February 2019]. <https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2019/02/17/trump-demands-europe-take-isis-prisoners-americas-latest-ask-in-syria/> [accessed 19 February 2019].

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- ★ Hamming, Tore Refslund, "Global Jihadism after the Syria War," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, volume 13, issue 3 [June 2019]. [https://www.academia.edu/41017682/Global\\_Jihadism\\_after\\_the\\_Syria\\_War](https://www.academia.edu/41017682/Global_Jihadism_after_the_Syria_War) [accessed 27 June 2022].

This is an excellent summary of key ideological currents and people related to and evolving from the fighting in Syria.

- ★ Hassan, Hassan, "What ISIS Did to My Village," *The Atlantic* [27 April 2019]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/04/isis-i-study-today-not-isis-my-past/588088/> [accessed 13 May 2019].

Well written article by a true ISIS expert. This is depressing, but illuminating as a reader can understand the present impacts of ISIS and the Syrian civil war.

- ★ Hawramy, Fazel, "How Iran helped Baghdad seize back Kirkuk," *al-Monitor* [17 October 2017]. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/10/iran-kirkuk-recapture-soleimani-quds-force-eqbalpour.html> [accessed 18 October 2017].

Really informative. The future for Kurdistan and the Iraqi Kurdish Regional Government may be in jeopardy as a result of recent events. The loss of Kirkuk in, what is essentially, a single-day battle is explained in some detail in this article. The Shia in Southern Iraq never really forgave the U.S. for not supporting them when they

rose up against Saddam Hussein in 1991. It is uncertain what the long-term effects of this will be for the Kurds vis-à-vis the U.S. government.

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- International Crisis Group, "Iraq: Stabilising the Contested District of Sinjar," *International Crisis Group Middle East & North Africa*, Number 235, 31 May 2022. <https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/235-iraq-sinjar.pdf> [accessed 8 June 2022].
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- ★ Kadercan, Burak, "Defeat as Victory? How the Islamic State Will Rely on Hijrah to Claim a Win," *War on the Rocks* [13 October 2017]. <https://warontherocks.com/2017/10/defeat-as-victory-how-the-islamic-state-will-rely-on-hijrah-to-claim-a-win/> [accessed 13 October 2017].

This is a great warning for what needs to be considered. The most important element is on understanding the ISIS perspective on territoriality.

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- ★ Knights, Michael and Alex Almeida, "Remaining and Expanding: The Recovery of Islamic State Operations in Iraq in 2019-2020," *Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point, CTC Sentinel*, May 2020, volume 13, Issue 5, 12-27. <https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/CTC-SENTINEL-052020.pdf> [accessed 5 June 2020].

The best data-based expression of ISIS behavior in its cycle 8 or cycle 9 behavior.

Kristian, Bonnie, "ISIS Might Come Back. That's Just One More Reason to Get Out of Syria," *Defense One* [20 February 2019]. <https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2019/02/isis-might-come-back-s-just-one-more-reason-get-out-syria/154973/> [accessed 21 February 2019].

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One of my favorite bosses regularly uttered my most hated phrase from my 26 years of uniformed service – "widen your aperture." I most often heard that phrase after I criticized something the U.S. military or

government was doing in Iraq. At the time, we both worked in Baghdad for a three-star general. I had served in the Middle East, at that point, for more than six years. I thought my aperture was wide – wider than most U.S. officers and, I thought (and I still think) wider than that of my boss. My complaints were almost always about the short-sighted or culturally foolish decisions or actions of the U.S. government as it sought to implement some policy or in the process of departing Iraq as the conversations happened at the end of 2010 and into the first half of 2011.

The attached article offers a perspective of a former junior officer and his frustrations. Some might challenge that perspective for not having a wide enough aperture. I think that such an approach is wrong. If our policies do not make sense to those who actually have to implement them then the problem is the policy and not the perspective. Widening or narrowing the aperture shouldn't alter the efficacy of an objective. It is possible, in war, that a junior leader is told to attack a place with limited chance of success in order to facilitate success elsewhere along the line, but that should be built in to the orders issued. Soldiers, unlike fighters and warriors, are expected to follow orders out of disciplined obedience that may result in their death in pursuit of the higher unit's mission or objective.

So much of my GWOT frustration has been that the senior leaders haven't know what they were doing any more than those who questioned them. Rather than have the hard conversations that might promote collective widening of perspective apertures, such efforts were closed down as the junior leader was told his or her perspective was inaccurate and if he or she had the proper perspective all things would become clear and comprehensible. That was not true ten years ago and it isn't true today.

- ★ Longman, James, "Caliphate wives share their stories year after ISIS defeat: Reporter's Notebook," *ABC News* [19 February 2020]. <https://abcnews.go.com/International/caliphate-wives-share-stories-year-isis-defeat-reporters/story?id=69055474> [accessed 20 February 2020].

This is another fascinating piece on the ISIS women still languishing in camps that Syrian Kurds are forced to manage. As I have said before, this is crucial to get right. The children in these camps are being indoctrinated with a story-narrative connection that is poisonous and maybe long-term dangerous and deadly. I appreciate another report that adds to earlier great work on this same topic.

Mamouri, Ali, "Iraq's Islamists dump religion for upcoming elections," *al-Monitor* [21 January 2018]. <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/iraq-political-islam-secular-civil-movement.html> [accessed 22 January 2018].

Mamouri, Ali, "Can Iraq's Sadr swing nonsectarian government?" *al-Monitor* [22 May 2018]. <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/05/iraq-election-abadi-muqtada-sadr-iran.html> [accessed 24 May 2018].

- ★ Mansour, Renad, "More Than Militias: Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces Are Here To Stay," *War on the Rocks* [3 April 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/04/more-than-militias-iraqs-popular-mobilization-forces-are-here-to-stay/> [accessed 6 April 2018].

The Popular Mobilization Forces represent a serious challenge to the monopoly of violence by the Iraqi state. There are many who will also say that such groups represent an attempt by Iran to create an Iraqi version of Hezbollah. This article provides both the background and the current situation sufficient to help a reader understand what has and is happening regarding what we typically call Shia militias.

Mansour, Renad, "Reining in Iraq's Paramilitaries Will Just Make Them Stronger," *Foreign Policy* [9 July 2019]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/07/09/shiite-militias-are-taking-over-the-iraqi-state-from-the-inside/> [accessed 10 July 2019].

Mansour, Renad and Hisham al-Hashimi, "ISIS Inc." *Foreign Policy* [16 January 2018]. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2018/01/16/isis-inc-islamic-state-iraq-syria/> [accessed 18 January 2018].

- ★ McCain, John, "Statement by SASC Chairman John McCain on the Retaking of Raqqa," McCain.Senate.gov [17 October 2017]. <https://www.mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2017/10/statement-by-sasc-chairman-john-mccain-on-the-retaking-of-raqqa> [accessed 18 October 2017].

Regardless of political affiliation, this statement reflects a sad truth that needs to be rectified quickly.

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McKay, Hollie, "After ISIS campaign, Iran-backed fighters in Iraq vow to drive out US troops," *Fox News* [21 December 2017]. [www.foxnews.com/world/2017/12/21/after-isis-defeat-iran-backed-fighters-in-iraq-vow-to-drive-out-us-troops.html](http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/12/21/after-isis-defeat-iran-backed-fighters-in-iraq-vow-to-drive-out-us-troops.html) [accessed 22 December 2017].

McKernan, Bethan, "Former IS fighters say they paid way out of Kurdish jail in 'reconciliation' scheme," *The Guardian* [22 November 2021]. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/22/former-is-fighters-say-they-paid-way-out-of-kurdish-jail-in-reconciliation-scheme> [accessed 3 December 2021].

- ★ Medecins Sans Frontieres, "Between Two Fires: Danger and Desperation in Syria's Al-Hol Camp," *Medecins Sans Frontieres* [November 2022]. <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/sites/default/files/documents/MSB141137%28High%29.pdf> [accessed 7 December 2022].

This article is depressing. I have been speaking and writing about the problems associated with those incarcerated as a result of ISIS for more than seven years now. We are losing a generation of children to ignorance and deprivation. If we think this won't result in extremism, then we are simply wrong.

I will warn you that this is a long piece of more than 20 pages of text. That said, the facts are crucial to know and understand. Al-Hol is a combination displaced person and prison camp that at one point had more than 70,000 people in it. It has housed tens of thousands for well more than five years now to include men, but mostly women and children. The children are being raised without proper education or anything that can be called education at all. There is no opportunity for proper health care, exercise, or development of skills. It is a prison with essentially no hope of opportunity. This is a recipe for long-term disaster.

Because of the size and the lack of anything called policing, violence is a way of life that includes theft, extortion, assault, battery, and murder. The environment is dominated by those with extreme views and objectives.

This needs a solution, or we will all pay as these children grow up and take out their frustrations and anger on the world.

- ★ Mekhennet, Souad and Joby Warrick, "The jihadist plan to use women to launch the next incarnation of ISIS," *The Washington Post* [26 November 2017]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/the-jihadist-plan-to-use-women-to-launch-the-next-incarnation-of-isis/2017/11/26/e81435b4-ca29-11e7-8321-481fd63f174d\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/the-jihadist-plan-to-use-women-to-launch-the-next-incarnation-of-isis/2017/11/26/e81435b4-ca29-11e7-8321-481fd63f174d_story.html) [accessed 28 November 2017].

This article provides excellent context for a deeper and more contextually appropriate conversation about ISIS and their ilk. In discussions of the future of ISIS, the comments can sometimes vary from the extremes of the group being destroyed to ISIS being populated by dedicated masterminds who are only feigning defeat to come back again once the resolve of its opponents has weakened. Obviously, both extreme positions are wrong. It is important to appreciate that there is a generational component to this conflict. The key to the next generation is the mothers. Understanding and shaping the narrative space is essential to working with the mothers to teach their children in such a way that we can all live on the same planet in peace.

Meko, Tim, "Now that the Islamic State has fallen in Iraq and Syria, where are all its fighters going?" *The Washington Post* [22 February 2018]. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2018/world/isis-returning-fighters/> [accessed 27 February 2018].

Merz, Fabien, "The State of the Islamic State," *CSS Analyses in Security Policy* 299 [March 2022]. <https://www.research-collection.ethz.ch/bitstream/handle/20.500.11850/533963/CSSAnalyse299-EN.pdf> [accessed 30 June 2022].

- ★ Micallef, Joseph V. "A Year After al-Baghdadi's Death, ISIS Is Alive -- and Growing," *Military.com* [6 November 2020]. <https://www.military.com/daily-news/opinions/2020/11/06/year-after-al-baghdadis-death-isis-alive-and-growing.html> [accessed 12 November 2020].  
A really good summary of the state of ISIS a year after al-Baghdadi's death. This is worth your time if ISIS has dropped off your 2020 radar because of all of the other events happening this year. I think the author places a lot more emphasis on the criminal aspect of the group than on the aspirational ideology. However; I believe that is because the criminal activities affect people globally rather than primarily within a specific region.
- Military Times, "After ISIS collapse in Raqqa, US faces other extremism threats," *Military Times* [17 October 2017]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/2017/10/17/after-is-collapse-in-raqqa-us-faces-other-extremism-threats/> [accessed 18 October 2017].
- Milton, Daniel and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "The Fight Goes On: The Islamic State's Continuing Military Efforts in Liberated Cities," Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point [29 June 2017]. <https://ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-fight-goes-on-the-islamic-states-continuing-military-efforts-in-liberated-cities> [accessed 14 July 2017].
- ★ Mironova, Vera, "The next Islamic State would be deadlier," *The Washington Post* [4 October 2017]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-next-islamic-state-would-be-deadlier/2017/10/04/2ed036bc-a85e-11e7-92d1-58c702d2d975\\_story.html?tid=ss\\_tw&utm\\_term=.ec095f1e9e67](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-next-islamic-state-would-be-deadlier/2017/10/04/2ed036bc-a85e-11e7-92d1-58c702d2d975_story.html?tid=ss_tw&utm_term=.ec095f1e9e67) [accessed 7 October 2017].  
Great article. The real danger with ISIS is not what they are doing now, but how we are fighting them. A military member once described fighting ISIS as fighting the mythological hydra. He suggested that Hercules needed to heal the wounds of the hydra before new heads could grow back. The question is are we healing the wounds or are we simply cutting off heads and allowing more to grow back in their place?
- Moshashai, Daniel, "Iraq after ISIS," Paper for the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna [13 April 2017]. [https://www.academia.edu/36806334/Iraq\\_after\\_ISIS](https://www.academia.edu/36806334/Iraq_after_ISIS) [accessed 30 November 2019].
- Mroue, Bassem, "Their caliphate in ruins, ISIS militants melt into the desert," *Military Times* [29 October 2017]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2017/10/29/their-caliphate-in-ruins-isis-militants-melt-into-the-desert/> [accessed 30 October 2017].
- Mühlberger, Wolfgang and Olli Ruohomäki, "Middle Eastern Terror in Flux: Mosul after DAESH, DAESH after Raqqa," The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, FIIA Briefing Paper 212 [January 2017]. [https://www.academia.edu/32941954/MIDDLE\\_EASTERN\\_TERROR\\_IN\\_FLUX](https://www.academia.edu/32941954/MIDDLE_EASTERN_TERROR_IN_FLUX) [accessed 30 November 2019].  
Data on the offensives and sieges for the fight for and against ISIS.
- Muñoz, Carlo, "Iraq's Sadr militia agrees to disband, surrender weapons to Baghdad," *The Washington Times* [11 December 2017]. <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/dec/11/iraqs-sadr-militia-agrees-disband-surrender-weapon/> [accessed 12 December 2017].
- Muralidharan, Rathna K. "The Battle For Iraq Doesn't End With Mosul—Or ISIS," *The National Interest* [12 July 2017]. <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-battle-iraq-doesnt-end-mosul%E2%80%94or-isis-21521> [accessed 14 July 2017].
- Murdock, Heather, "After Mosul: The IS Family Dilemma," *Voice of America* [16 July 2017]. <https://www.voanews.com/a/after-mosul-the-is-family-dilemma/3946483.html> [accessed 16 July 2017].  
Useful anecdotal information on the treatment of ISIS families post liberation.
- ★ Murdock, Heather, "Rebuilding 'Hell Square' in Syria's Raqqa," *Voice of America* [6 November 2017]. <https://www.voanews.com/a/syria-raqqa-hell-square/4102735.html> [accessed 7 November 2017].  
This article explains through a few anecdotes the problems with killing a hydra. How does one heal the

wounds? The wounds present in Raqqa are enormous and will take years to heal. The patient assistance and re-education needed is daunting. It is also necessary. If there is no healing, then as with the mythical hydra, two more heads will grow back to take the place of the ISIS head so recently removed from these various villages, towns, and cities.

- ★ Murdock, Heather, "Iraq: A Year after Victory, Stability Still a Dream," *Voice of America* [25 December 2018]. <https://www.voanews.com/a/iraq-a-year-after-victory-stability-still-a-dream/4715827.html> [accessed 26 December 2018].

Who should rebuild after ISIS? Is the decision to delay or deny funding a purposeful effort to punish those who lived under ISIS control? The hopeful answer is no. I remember those who said that Nuri al-Maliki was not intentionally driving the Sunni toward extremism in 2011 and 2012. Spending billions in reconstruction now may save hundreds of billions in ammunition expended a few years down the road.

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Rempfer, Kyle, "Nine Abrams tanks fell into the hands of Iranian-backed militias during anti-ISIS fight," *Military Times* [8 February 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/2018/02/08/nine-abrams-tanks-fell-into-the-hands-of-iranian-backed-militias-during-anti-isis-fight/> [accessed 10 February 2018].

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- ★ Rogin, Josh, "ISIL is building a new caliphate from inside a Syrian refugee camp, and the West has no plan to combat it," *National Post* [16 August 2019]. <https://nationalpost.com/news/world/isil-is-building-a-new-caliphate-from-inside-a-syrian-refugee-camp-and-the-west-has-no-plan-to-combat->



[it](#) [accessed 17 August 2019].

Please read this. What a sad commentary on our failure to learn from our own mistakes. Some have scoffingly said that ISIS was created in Camp Bucca during the US occupation of Iraq. It was there that we allowed Abu Bakr al Baghdadi access and respect in the facility which allowed him to build his network of contacts. These contacts were among those who built and led ISIS upon al-Baghdadi's release. This article explains that we are doing something very similar in Syria. It is not enough to beat an enemy on the battlefield anymore. We must help to build the desired new world. This isn't new, but we seem to not want to learn it.

Great authors and researchers like Rukmini Callimachi and Anne Speckhard among others have been warning about this for years. We need to take action.

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This article is a simple road-trip story. That is not what makes it worth reading. The value in the story comes from the implications of the patchwork of groups and lack of consistent control across a relatively small portion of a much larger country. How does a central government regain control of these disparate groups that it needed to remove ISIS?

Saadoun, Mustafa, "Iraqi authorities clamp down on sectarian hate speech," *Al-Monitor* [19 November 2017]. <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/11/shiite-arbaeen-pilgrimage-sunni-figures.html> [accessed 20 November 2017].

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- ★ Schulman, Susan, "Special report from the field: The women of the Islamic State in Iraq," *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 22:2-13 [2022]. DOI: 10.1111/sena.12361.

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Schumacher, Elizabeth, "Iraq sentences 27 to death over Camp Speicher massacre," *Deutsche Welle* [8 August 2017]. <http://www.dw.com/en/iraq-sentences-27-to-death-over-camp-speicher-massacre/a-40013656> [accessed 9 August 2017].

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Not a statement of US strategy; this article still gives insight into that strategy. It is one of attrition. The most fascinating quote comes from a USMC colonel who says, "If al-Baghdadi is the king of his so-called caliphate, then we don't need to go directly after him," Folsom said, comparing the war to a game of chess. "All we need to do is systematically pick off his knights, his rooks and bishops, his mid-level and senior commanders, until none of them are left to protect him. And then eventually we'll bring him to justice."

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★ Sly, Liz and Aaso Ameen Schwan, "ISIS is near defeat in Iraq. Now comes the hard part." *The Washington Post* [13 September 2017]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/isis-is-near-defeat-in-iraq-now-comes-the-hard-part/2017/09/13/68b1f742-8d9e-11e7-9c53-6a169beb0953\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/isis-is-near-defeat-in-iraq-now-comes-the-hard-part/2017/09/13/68b1f742-8d9e-11e7-9c53-6a169beb0953_story.html) [accessed 15 September 2017].

Reconciliation and rebuilding will determine what becomes of Iraq. In this article one sees that neither process is moving forward at a pace that will prevent future internal strife. The article includes an excellent quote from a former Iraqi Foreign Minister who states, "All the writing is on the wall that there will be another ISIS," he said, using an acronym for the Islamic State. "The scale of frustration. The lack of hope. The lack of government stepping in. What can you expect?"

Sly, Liz and Louisa Loveluck, "Islamic State detainees mutiny at prison in Syria," *The Washington Post* [30 March 2020]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/islamic-state-detainees-mutiny-at-prison-in-syria/2020/03/30/8fc4a0dc-7252-11ea-ad9b-254ec99993bc\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/islamic-state-detainees-mutiny-at-prison-in-syria/2020/03/30/8fc4a0dc-7252-11ea-ad9b-254ec99993bc_story.html) [accessed 30 March 2020].

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Snow, Shawn, "New in 2018: The fight against ISIS evolves," *Military Times* [31 December 2017]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2017/12/31/new-in-2018-the-fight-against-isis-evolves/> [accessed 2 January 2018].

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The Soufan Center, "IntelBrief: One Year after Killing of Baghdadi, What is the State of the Islamic State?" *The Soufan Center* [26 October 2020]. <https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-one-year-after-killing-of-baghdadi-what-is-the-state-of-the-islamic-state/> [accessed 28 October 2020].

For those not already receiving material from Ajit Maan, Ph.D. this is an excellent summary of the current status of ISIS. Simply stated, it is not destroyed. The division of state narratives is probably ISIS' most successful endeavor. It claimed a goal early on to rid the Muslim community and the world of the gray zone. One interpretation of the gray zone is the area where a person can be hyphenated - i.e. a Muslim-American or a French-Muslim. ISIS and their ilk want to force people into the extremes and by so doing increase their ability to lead one of the extremes.

South, Todd, "Iraq declared victory over ISIS. But the fight isn't over." *Military Times* [20 December 2017]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2017/12/20/iraq-declared-victory-over-isis-but-the-fight-isnt-over/> [accessed 21 December 2017].

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Speckhard, Anne, "PERSPECTIVE: ISIS Death in SDF Prison Raises Questions About Repatriation Before They Face Death," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [8 September 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/perspective-isis-death-in-sdf-prison-raises-questions-about-repatriation-before-they-face-death/> (accessed 15 September 2020).

Speckhard, Anne, "How the FBI Nabbed a German ISIS Woman Over 5-Year-Old Girl's Vile Murder," *The Daily Beast* [25 October 2021]. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/inside-the-fbi-plot-to-nab-jennifer-wenisch-a-german-isis-woman-over-5-year-old-girls-murder> [accessed 2 November 2021].

Speckhard, Anne, "ISIS Women Accused of Turning Boys as Young as 13 Into a Human Stud Farm," *The*

*Daily Beast* [23 February 2023]. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/isis-women-accused-of-turning-teen-boys-into-human-stud-farm-in-syria> [accessed 28 December 2023].

The title is salacious. The subject is important. The article is old, but as I have said, it has been in my inbox for ten months and deserved earlier treatment but is getting it now.

I have been talking about the repercussions of how ISIS prisoners were handled for many years now. This article expresses the seriousness and commitment associated with the belief in and adherence to the caliphate as established by ISIS. Too many in the West have treated the caliphate with a certain disdain as if it weren't serious or even a real thing. The details in this article express the seriousness with which many people take the caliphate and the lengths to which they will go in expressing their dedication to it.

The article also illuminates something that is also overlooked – the role of women in this current commitment to jihad. ISIS and Hamas have numerous dedicated women. I expect that this extends to other groups to include Ansar Allah (Houthis), al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, Taliban, Boko Haram, and others. Note that many of the pro-Hamas demonstrations in Western cities have been led by women or that women are the most prominent voices. The role of women in what can be labeled as religious extremism is critical to understand. Too often women have been portrayed as victims of the aforementioned groups. This article and numerous others like it express that women are not just victims. Some women are central to the growth and promulgation of the ideology.

For those who no longer believe ISIS to be a topic worthy of their time, I would suggest that the role of women in supporting and then regenerating Hamas will also be important and may bear similar traits to the lengths gone by women in support of ISIS. This article shows what seems to be the extreme version. That said, please note that women in these camps have done everything from this to murder and intimidation as covered in other reports.

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "How Do You Deprogram a Country After ISIS Is Defeated?" *The Daily Beast* [19 December 2017]. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-do-you-deprogram-a-country-after-isis-is-defeated> [accessed 19 December 2017].

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Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "ISIS - When Serving Terrorism is an "All in the Family" Affair How to Recover the Lost Children and Spouses of ISIS," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [7 May 2018]. [https://www.academia.edu/36567723/ISIS - When Serving Terrorism is an All in the Family Affair How to Recover the Lost Children and Spouses of ISIS 1?auto=download](https://www.academia.edu/36567723/ISIS_-_When_Serving_Terrorism_is_an_All_in_the_Family_Affair_How_to_Recover_the_Lost_Children_and_Spouses_of_ISIS_1?auto=download) [accessed 8 May 2018].

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "PERSPECTIVE: In Legal Wrangling Over ISIS Families, Should Anyone Be Allowed Home?" Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [31 October 2018]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/perspective-in-legal-wrangling-over-isis-babies-parents-should-anyone-be-allowed-to-return-home/> [accessed 1 November 2018].

- ★ Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "Returning ISIS Foreign Fighters: Radicalization Challenges for the Justice System," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [4 November 2018]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/returning-isis-foreign-fighters-radicalization-challenges-for-the-justice-system/> [accessed 5 November 2018].

This is an excellent description of the problems with how the West sees the Islamic State and those who fight there. Dr. Speckhard's work is essential for expressing a more complete understanding of the challenges associated with returning Islamic State fighters whether they be defectors or prisoners.

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "ISIS women: Victims, criminals, or both?" *Washington Examiner* [2 November 2018]. <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/op-eds/isis-women-victims-criminals-or-both> [accessed 6 November 2018].

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "Yazidi Survivors of ISIS' Cruelty Face Hurdles in Finding Justice,"

Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [18 December 2018]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/yazidi-survivors-of-isis-cruelty-face-hurdles-finding-justice/> [accessed 19 December 2018].

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "PERSPECTIVE: Children of ISIS Mothers Are Dying in Front of their Eyes in Detention Camps," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [18 March 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/perspective-children-of-isis-mothers-are-dying-in-front-of-their-eyes-in-detention-camps/> [accessed 20 March 2019].

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "PERSPECTIVE: Enacting Western Justice in Regard to ISIS Foreign Fighters and Their Families," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [1 July 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/perspective-enacting-western-justice-in-regard-to-isis-foreign-fighters-and-their-families/> [accessed 4 July 2019].

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "PERSPECTIVE: Trump's Warning to Europe Accentuates Need for Countries to Repatriate ISIS Detainees," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [13 August 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/perspective-trumps-warning-to-europe-accentuates-need-for-countries-to-repatriate-isis-detainees/> [accessed 18 August 2019].

- ★ Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "Waiting for Return of the Caliphate Among ISIS Enforcers in Syria's al Hol, Ain Issa and Roj Camps," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [3 September 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/waiting-for-the-return-of-the-caliphate-among-isis-enforcers-in-syrias-al-hol-ain-issa-and-roj-camps/> [accessed 3 September 2019].

Great article. This is wonderful support to earlier posted articles on the problems in the detention camps in Syria. Here are details of the actions of pro-ISIS women in the camps. These camps are seemingly breeding grounds for a next generation of extremism.

Speckhard, Anne and Ardian Shajkovci, "PERSPECTIVE: SDF Needs Our Help Now as Another Woman in Camp Hol Killed by ISIS Enforcers," Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US [1 October 2019]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/terrorism-study/perspective-sdf-needs-our-help-now-as-another-woman-in-camp-hol-killed-by-isis-enforcers/> [accessed 23 October 2019].

Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg, "Inside the Sisterhood Springing Jihadis From Jail," *The Daily Beast* [24 May 2020]. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/inside-the-sisterhood-springing-jihadis-from-jail> [accessed 30 May 2020].

Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg, "The Curious Case of ISIS's Recent Audio Diatribe About Qatar," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [2 June 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/the-curious-case-of-isis-recent-audio-diatribe-about-qatar/> [accessed 5 June 2020].

- ★ Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg, "The Security Risk Posed by ISIS Women Smuggling Their Way Out of Camp Hol," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [22 June 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/the-security-risk-posed-by-isis-women-smuggling-their-way-out-of-camp-hol/> [accessed 24 June 2020].

Please read and carefully consider.

I do not want to sound like a broken record, but there must be concern about the camps and prisons where members of and those associated with ISIS are being held. America and much of the world is concerned with a virus and various domestic problems facing their populations now. It is understandable why there wouldn't be interest in a problem that may not manifest itself violently for months, years, or decades to come. I am



pretty confident that these camps and prisons will be directly linked to leaders of the next wave of extremism in the Middle East and beyond.

Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg, "Can an ISIS Terrorist be Rehabilitated and Reintegrated into Society?" *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [23 June 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/can-an-isis-terrorist-be-rehabilitated-and-reintegrated-into-society/> [accessed 30 June 2020].

Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg, "Perspective: Can We Repatriate the ISIS Children?" *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [7 July 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/perspective-can-we-repatriate-the-isis-children/> [accessed 9 July 2020].

This article includes excellent details on the main refugee camps in Syria.

Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg, "Is Turkey a Bad Actor in Regard to ISIS Prisoners Being Held in SDF Territory?" *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [20 July 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/is-turkey-a-bad-actor-in-regard-to-isis-prisoners-being-held-in-sdf-territory/> [accessed 23 July 2020].

Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg, "PERSPECTIVE: How Men and Women Were Drawn to the Hyper-Gendered ISIS Caliphate," *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [31 August 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/perspective-how-men-and-women-were-drawn-to-the-hyper-gendered-isis-caliphate/> [accessed 2 September 2020].

I consistently find these reports interesting and informative. Anne and Molly raise numerous points that are worth pondering. Recent events should give reason to understand why people radicalize. Read this.

Speckhard, Anne and Molly Ellenberg, "Will Upcoming Trials of ISIS Women in Syria Speed Up Repatriations of Some?" *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [26 October 2020]. <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/will-upcoming-trials-of-isis-women-in-northeast-syria-speed-up-repatriations-of-some/> [accessed 26 November 2020].

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This is long, but very important to read. This is a fantastically depressing article. As I have participated in and observed the fighting against ISIS, there was always a deep fear that the antidote for ISIS would spawn the next round of violent extremism in Mesopotamia. This article gives support to that fear.

The way a force wins a war can determine how soon and how violent will be the next war. It seems like some are seeking to destroy ISIS through the worst methods possible. This will only work if they kill enough such that no similar group will ever return. Based on this article, that does not seem to be the case. Instead, more are being humiliated than are being killed. Such actions may haunt Iraq for decades to come.

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★ Toumaj, Amir, "Iran's Qods Force chief calls Iraqi militia commander a 'living martyr'," *Long War Journal* [13 July 2017]. <http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/07/irans-qods-force-chief-calls-iraqi-militia-commander-living-martyr.php> [accessed 16 July 2017].

Qassem Soleimani provides some excellent quotes that clearly demonstrate Iran's vision of making Iraq like another Lebanon with a powerful and politically influential military-political power structure.

★ Toumaj, Amir, "IRGC tries to appropriate Mosul victory," *Long War Journal* [22 July 2017].

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Simple discussion on how the transient or active narrative is being used to shape and conform to the liminal or existing narrative space terrain. Iran is both creating and using narrative as it can to develop a post-conflict environment that suits its interests in Iraq.

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There is a reason why I value Graeme Wood's writing and analysis on ISIS. He is thoughtful, well-informed, and usually correct. His article and assessment on the ISIS claim of responsibility is therefore worth reading. In short, we do not know, at this point, whether or not this claim has validity, but by making such a claim ISIS has staked some level of credibility on what the facts will bear out.

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I am a fan of Graeme Wood's writing and his research. This is an interesting article and one that causes me some confusion. I don't know if I like it or not and that is why I recommend it. It is short, but also poignant. The main character is also a character in Wood's excellent book, *The Way of the Strangers*. The transformation and the reasoning are controversial, but several of the points are profound. The best and most important point is to remember that a jihadist and almost any other extremist is not stupid, so don't approach such a person with a stupid argument.

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## ISIS inside United States

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I have recently been working on a chapter in which I suggest that groups like ISIS would seek to narratively take advantage of COVID-19 and the American protests. In the case of this article, the primary actor is al-Qaeda and not ISIS. 2020 gives us a front row seat to watch just how manipulatable people are through standard, online, and social media. Other writers have already warned about attempts to manipulate populations with respect to elections. COVID-19 and various protests provide an important opportunity to teach critical thinking skills in order to develop resilient and anti-fragile thinkers who are inoculated to manipulations from misinformation.

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This report provides information on U.S. residents and citizens charged and arrested for supporting ISIS. Some the information from the executive summary is included here: "As of the fall of 2015, U.S. authorities speak of some 250 Americans who have traveled or attempted to travel to Syria/Iraq to join the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and 900 active investigations against ISIS sympathizers in all 50 states."

- The average age is 26; 86% are male; Their activities were located in 21 states.
- 51% traveled or attempted to travel abroad; 27% were involved in plots to carry out attacks on U.S. soil.
- 55% were arrested in an operation involving an informant and/or an undercover agent.
- A small number of Americans have been killed in ISIS-related activities: three inside the U.S., at least a dozen abroad.
- The profiles of individuals involved in ISIS-related activities in the U.S. differ widely in race, age, social class, education, and family background. Their motivations are equally diverse and defy easy analysis.
- Social media plays a crucial role in the radicalization and, at times, mobilization of U.S.-based ISIS sympathizers. The Program on Extremism has identified some 300 American and/or U.S.-based ISIS sympathizers active on social media, spreading propaganda, and interacting with like-minded individuals. Some members of this online echo chamber eventually make the leap from keyboard warriors to actual militancy.
- American ISIS sympathizers are particularly active on Twitter, where they spasmodically create accounts that often get suspended in a never-ending cat-and-mouse game. Some accounts (the "nodes") are the generators of primary content, some (the "amplifiers") just retweet material, others (the "shout-outs") promote newly created accounts of suspended users.
- ISIS-related radicalization is by no means limited to social media. While instances of purely web-driven, individual radicalization are numerous, in several cases U.S.-based individuals initially cultivated and later strengthened their interest in ISIS's narrative through face-to-face relationships. In most cases online and offline dynamics complement one another.
- The spectrum of U.S.-based sympathizers' actual involvement with ISIS varies significantly, ranging from those who are merely inspired by its message to those few who reached mid-level leadership positions within the group

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## ISIS Objectives

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Abstract. This study addresses three questions: 1. What are the objectives of the leaders of ISIL? 2. What are the objectives of the followers of ISIL? 3. How are the two sets of objectives related?

To answer these questions, we analyzed the transcripts of interviews and presentations of 59 subject matter experts (SMEs) and conducted a separate analysis of speeches of ISIL leaders and selected Internet sources. In both efforts we identified and structured the strategic, fundamental, and means objectives of ISIL and its followers. The results indicate that ISIL's leaders pursue four strategic objectives: (1) Establish a Caliphate in Iraq and the Levant, (2) Control and Govern the Caliphate, (3) Expand Islam and Sharia Law Worldwide, and (4) Recreate the Power and Glory of (Sunni) Islam. The followers' objectives can be partitioned into three strategic objectives: Humanitarian Fulfillment, Religious Fulfillment, and Personal Fulfillment. The objectives identified from the SME interviews were similar to those identified from ISIL leaders' statements and the Internet. However, the Internet search revealed many more personal objectives of ISIL followers. The results further indicate that ISIL's leadership objectives are closely aligned with those of its followers. There also is a sharp contrast between the objectives of ISIL and those of Al Qaeda, particularly ISIL's emphasis on occupying and controlling territories in Iraq and Syria versus Al Qaeda's focus on worldwide jihad.

- ★ Winter, Charlie and Haroro J. Ingram, "Why ISIS Is So Good at Branding Its Failures as Successes," *Defense One* [20 September 2017]. <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2017/09/why-isis-so-good-branding-its-failures-successes/141142/> [accessed 21 September 2017].

The author is one of the few people worth reading every time he or she writes about ISIS. In this case, the article explains the narrative power of ISIS attacks regardless of objective assessments of success or failure. The perspective is that of Western security forces rather than the ISIS view as explained in *The Management*

*of Savagery*. ISIS does not need to accomplish objective success to achieve its end. They are seeking to overwhelm Western forces by causing them to create an onerous security apparatus whose social and financial burdens will exhaust the state. In this grain, every ISIS attack that leads to an increase in the security burden is “success.”

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## Islam and ISIS

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## Other Players – China

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The author is considered to be one of the most influential figures in twenty-first century Chinese politics. There is a 1988 article from him below as well as a descriptive article about him. This book captures his descriptions of the United States as an observer of the country with emphasis on the paradoxes of the nation.

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I am fascinated by this topic right now. I discussed the role of China in the Middle East with several of my Middle Eastern students and their perspective was that the U.S. created a vacuum by abandoning its position in the region and obviously some other country was certain to fill that vacuum. This article expresses what China is doing to be successful in the region and it makes sense why it would work. China’s approach appears, on the surface, to be a better offer than that of the U.S. because it seems to be a no-strings-attached relationship. That is not true; China has many strings, and it also doesn’t deliver the same quality product regardless of the nature of the product, but few leaders care, and the average citizen typically won’t ever see the effect of the relationship down the road and China gets away with it.

Back in 2005 I was given the perspective that China is renting the U.S. Navy by buying American debt. In effect, this is true. China can do what it does globally because it is not responsible for securing any part of the global commons. That work is done primarily by the U.S. Navy and to a lesser degree the U.S. Air Force. China is a free rider on that security system and is enjoying the benefits of being able to put more money into the deliverables than to securing the lines of communication from source to destination.

- ★ Huning, Wang, “The Structure of China’s Changing Political Culture,” translated by Matthew D. Johnson and hosted by the Reading and Writing the China Dream Project at [readingthechinadream.com](http://readingthechinadream.com) [March 1988]. <https://www.readingthechinadream.com/wang-huning-ldquothe-structure-of-chinarsquos-changing-political-culturerdquo.html> [accessed 3 November 2021].

This is a fabulous article expressing narrative war within China and the desire by the author to create a new narrative for China. This is supportive of my current (2021) assertion that China’s behavior regarding to decisions about limiting youth video game use, limitations on outside male characterizations, and treatment of Uighurs are all efforts to establish a consistent and unified national narrative. Given the fact that the author is considered to be the single most important ideological voice in 2021 China gives my assertion a greater level of significance.

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The Taiwan-China conflict is an essential area of study to understand narrative war in progress.

The primary elements of narrative war are the effort to disrupt the resonance of the governing story (in this case the government of Taiwan) with the societal narrative and to increase the resonance of the opposing story (in this case the CCP) with the societal narrative. The secondary element is the displacement of the governing story and maybe the government itself. We are seeing these efforts play out across the world.

This is the present dominant philosophy of war. Conduct of narrative war plays into the hands of those who are willing to be patient and it provides a way for a weak actor to win against a strong actor without the need for power transition.

Thank you, Libby Lange and Doowan Lee for writing this and Calvin Evans for sharing it.

Lee, Taylor A. and Peter W. Singer, "The PLA's People Problem: China's military has long struggled to field quality personnel," *Defense One* [11 January 2023].

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★ Lyons, N.S. "The Triumph and Terror of Wang Huning," *Palladium Magazine* [11 October 2021].

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## Other Players – Egypt

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## Other Players – Indonesia

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- Chan, Francis, "Efforts under way to verify chatter about death of Indonesian ISIS leader linked to Marina Bay plot," *The Strait Times* [4 December 2017]. <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/efforts-underway-to-verify-chatter-about-the-death-of-indonesian-isis-leader-linked-to> [accessed 5 December 2017].
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Soeriaatmadia, Wahyudi, "Indonesia police nab terrorist suspect planning to join ISIS in Marawi," *The Straits Times* [13 November 2017]. <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/indonesia-police-nab-terrorist-suspect-planning-to-join-isis-in-marawi> [accessed 15 November 2017].

Soloway, Benjamin, "To Understand Why the Islamic State Just Hit Jakarta, Don't Look to Paris — Look to Indonesia", *Foreign Policy* [14 January 2016]. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/14/to-understand-why-the-islamic-state-just-hit-jakarta-dont-look-to-paris-look-to-indonesia/> [accessed 16 January 2016].

The gist of the article is that all ISIS attacks are local. Not shocking in the context of the events as have happened, but this does challenge the common notion that ISIS is representative of a monolithic Islamist organization or ideology.

★ Stahlhut, Marco, "In Interview, Top Indonesian Muslim Scholar Says Stop Pretending That Orthodox Islam and Violence Aren't Linked," *Time* [7 September 2017]. <http://time.com/4930742/islam-terrorism-islamophobia-violence/> [accessed 12 September 2017].

One rarely reads such a candid assessment of the connection of the traditional/fundamental interpretations of the Islamic faith to the current level of violence from an Islamic leader/scholar. I have interacted with the Nahdlatul Ulama and their representatives and find that they are serious about gaining control of the narrative space of Islam from the violent extremists who have driven the debate since 9/11 (at least). The Nahdlatul Ulama seek to redefine the relationship between Muslims and their respective states and the minority or majority non-Muslim populations with whom they live. I wish Yahya Cholil Staquf and his organization all the success possible in this effort.

Staquf, Kyai Haji Yahya Cholil, "Civilizational Nobility," Speech given by the General Secretary, Nahdlatul Ulama Supreme Council Asia Liberty Forum 2018, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Jakarta, Indonesia [11 February 2018]. [http://www.baytarrahmah.org/media/political-communicues/2018/2018\\_02\\_11\\_Civilizational-Nobility/2018\\_02\\_11\\_Civilizational-Nobility.pdf](http://www.baytarrahmah.org/media/political-communicues/2018/2018_02_11_Civilizational-Nobility/2018_02_11_Civilizational-Nobility.pdf) [accessed 20 February 2018].



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This is an excellent expression of elements of narrative strategies and what I call maneuver in the narrative space. The author and General Secretary of the Nahdlatul Ulama Supreme Council in Indonesia expresses the importance of transformation of the narrative space landscape such that there is a "successful implementation of a global strategy to develop a new Islamic orthodoxy that reflects the actual circumstances of the modern world in which Muslims must live and practice their faith."

## Other Players – Iran

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This is an excellent non-partisan appreciation of Iran's military capabilities and strategic outlook. This has some of the best information with respect to weapon systems and service capacity.

al-Jaffal, Omar, "Will Iraq comply with US-imposed Iran sanctions?" *al-Monitor* [10 August 2018]. <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/08/iraq-iran-us-sanction.html> [accessed 13 August 2018].

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Most people who served in Iraq clearly know that Iran was the winner of the U.S. invasion of Iraq and the insurgency that followed. This article makes clear that which we intuitively knew – Iran bought and manipulated Iraqi politicians and regularly outmaneuvered their American counterparts. It was clear, in 2014 and 2015 that the Iranians were in a separate joint operations center with the Iraqi security forces. They were regularly using the fight against ISIS as a means to expand their influence in Iraq. Read this article for the supporting summary and limited documentation of those already surmised truths.

The Associated Press, "Iran Recruiting Thousands of Afghans, Pakistanis to Fight in Syria," *Haaretz* [16 September 2017]. <http://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/iran/1.812628> [accessed 16 September 2017].

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January: How Trump Pushed U.S. and Iran to the Brink of War,” *The New York Times* [11 January 2020]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/11/us/politics/iran-trump.html> [accessed 13 January 2020].

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Chulov, Martin, “Iran tells Middle East militias: prepare for proxy war,” *The Guardian* [16 May 2019]. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/16/iran-tells-middle-east-militias-prepare-for-proxy-war> [accessed 17 May 2019].

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<https://nsiteam.com/iranian-media-narrative-perspectives-on-the-us-and-global-competition/> [accessed 7 August 2019].

★ Daragahi, Borzou, “Inside Iran’s Mission To Dominate The Middle East,” *BuzzFeed News* [30 July 2017]. <https://www.buzzfeed.com/borzoudaragahi/irans-plan-to-run-the-middle-east> [accessed 31 July 2017].

The best article I have read to provide the general scope and conduct of Iranian operations around the Middle East. This provides information on Maneuver in the Narrative Space from an Iranian perspective. The goals for Iran are spelled out by an Iranian International relations professor about half way into the article – in short, they are an expeditionary force that intends to secure Iran by promoting Iranian interests abroad. A few paragraphs later, the author provides the conceptual underpinnings of Iranian maneuver in the narrative space.

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[are-lessons-in-the-1953-cia-coup](#) [accessed 27 June 2017].

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- ★ Eisenstadt, Michael. The Missing Lever: Information Activities against Iran. Policy Notes from The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Number 1, March 2010. <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PolicyNote01.pdf> [accessed 6 October 2016].

Excellent piece describing the need to address what I refer to as Maneuver in the Narrative Space. The author provides quality observations on the nature of narrative (he speaks in terms of strategic communications) in Iran and more broadly in the region.

- ★ Eisenstadt, Michael. The Strategic Culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran: Religion, Expediency, and Soft Power in an Era of Disruptive Change. Middle East Studies Monographs. Quantico, Virginia: Marine Corps University, November 2015. [https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/MESM\\_7\\_Eisenstadt.pdf](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/MESM_7_Eisenstadt.pdf) [accessed 6 October 2016].

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Explanation of Iran's growing cyber capability.

- ★ Entous, Adam and Evan Osnos, "Qassem Suleimani And How Nations Decide To Kill: A new frontier in the use of assassination." *The New Yorker* [3 February 2020]. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/02/10/qassem-suleimani-and-how-nations-decide-to-kill> [accessed 19 February 2020].

The article provides excellent context for the killing of Qassim Soleimani. It is well worth the time to read or listen to at the link below. The authors provide a balanced discussion and historical perspective. They also ask some interesting and important questions for consideration.

Esfandiari, Golnaz, "Tempers Flare As Iranian Lawmakers Debate UN Effort Targeting Terrorism," *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty* [23 May 2018]. <https://www.rferl.org/a/iran-tempers-flare-as-lawmakers-debate-un-effort-targeting-terrorism/29246005.html> [accessed 24 May 2018].

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- ★ Filkins, Dexter, "The Twilight of the Iranian Revolution," *The New Yorker* [18 May 2020].

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Giglio, Mike, "The Flash Point Between America and Iran Could Be Iraq's Militias," *The Atlantic* [8 May 2019]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/05/iraq-militias-flash-point-between-united-states-and-iran/589003/> [accessed 13 May 2019].

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Paul Cabaugh's comments on this article are more important than the article itself. I completely agree with the importance of understanding (actually and completely) the people who are the focus of an action, engagement, or policy. I disagree with the author's implication that policy makers pay attention to the tone and nuances of reporters. I don't believe that such reports actually shape policy at all. The problem, with respect to this article, in policy making is that so few of the people a policy maker trusts have the understanding the author is advocating. It isn't reporters who need to understand the local people (they probably need to, but their understanding won't make much of a difference) - it is the military, political, and policy professionals.

I agree with the emphasis on proper understanding of what I (and many others) call narrative space in the regions and countries where we engage. That understanding must be shared by many people. I hope that this article and others like it will challenge those who make decisions to do better framing of the problem set to



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## Other Players – Jordan

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Part of narrative war is the use of history. Such use isn't controlled by or even connected to some form of objectively accurate history. In my 2014 book *Bees and Spiders* I recommend the importance of recognizing their history rather than real history to obtain cross-cultural influence. How a people, culture, or leader sees and interprets history is more important in the influence game than is any appreciation of objective history since it is their history that provides that shaping impetus in their narrative space. As someone who teaches history for a living, I must express the value in understanding, studying, and pursuing something that can be called objective or real history. The value of real history in cross-cultural or cross-narrative influence is that one can then appreciate just how much off the leader, culture, or people are and it may be possible to more effectively engage in the narrative war through such understanding.

The material in the article that follows identifies how Putin has selectively expressed Russian history. His selectivity expresses something about his narrative. I don't believe that Putin is ignorant of the repeated efforts and failures. I believe that he knows them all too well. I further believe that he is purposely emphasizing success to put the effort in perspective to express the value of suffering. The Russians suffered much in gaining Crimea and what is today Ukraine. They lost many battles. But, in the end, because they persevered, the Russians won. Putin is emphasizing the results of Russian perseverance and ability to endure suffering; he isn't hiding it. It is because of this perseverance that Russia will win now (according to Putin's narrative reinforcing stories) as it always had in the past.

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- ★ Greenberg, Andy, "The Untold Story of NotPetya, the Most Devastating Cyberattack in History," *Wired* [22 August 2018]. <https://www.wired.com/story/notpetya-cyberattack-ukraine-russia-code-crashed-the-world/> [accessed 26 August 2018].

This is really a great article. Thanks Howard for sharing. There is so much that we do not even know or agree about when it comes to cyber crimes and cyber attacks. Is it warfare? When does it become war? Can one retaliate with physical violence when confronted by cyber violence? This is truly a staggering set of questions that we must address or unintended consequences could be devastating.

Harris, Shane and Nancy A. Youssef, "U.S. Spies Root for an ISIS-Russia War", *The Daily Beast* [9 November 2015]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/11/09/u-s-spies-root-for-an-isis-russia-war.html> [accessed 10 November 2015].

Ioffe, Julia, "How Russians Got Used to Terrorism," *The Atlantic* [4 April 2017]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/04/russia-st-petersburg-terrorism/521796/> [accessed 5 April 2017].

- ★ Ioffe, Julia, "What Putin Really Wants," *Defense One* [17 December 2017]. <http://www.defenseone.com/threats/2017/12/what-putin-really-wants/144626/> [accessed 19 December 2017].

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Isachenkov, Vladimir, "Russian military shows drones it says came from Syria raid," *Defense News* [11 January 2018]. <https://www.defensenews.com/global/mideast-africa/2018/01/11/russian-military-shows-drones-it-says-came-from-syria-raid/> [accessed 12 January 2018].

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Great criticisms of the U.S. military in comparison to the Russian performance in Ukraine.

Johnson, David, "The Army Risks Reasoning Backwards in Analyzing Ukraine," *War on the Rocks* [14 June 2022]. <https://warontherocks.com/2022/06/the-army-risks-reasoning-backwards-in-analyzing-ukraine/> [accessed 30 June 2022].

Great criticisms of Multi-Domain Operations in comparison to the Russian performance in Ukraine.

Jonsson, Oscar, "Gen. McChrystal is right — in fact, Russian leaders think they already are at war," *Foreign Policy* [30 January 2017]. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/01/30/gen-mcchrystal-is-right-in-fact-russian-leaders-think-they-already-are-at-war/> [accessed 4 April 2017].

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Kenar, Ceren and Ragip Soylu, "Why Are Russian Engineers Working at an Islamic State-Controlled Gas

Plant in Syria?" *Foreign Policy* [9 February 2016]. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/02/09/why-are-russian-engineers-working-at-an-islamic-state-controlled-gas-plant-in-syria/> [accessed 10 February 2016].

Kleisner, Theodore W. and Trevor T. Garmey, "Tactical TikTok for Great Power Competition: Applying the Lessons of Ukraine's IO Campaign to Future Large-Scale Conventional Operations," *Military Review* [April 2022]. <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/Online-Exclusive/2022-OLE/Kleisner-and-Garmey/linkId/163392456/> [accessed 31 August 2022].

What makes this article worthwhile is the discussion on the transformation of U.S. Army doctrine regarding information operations.

Kofman, Michael, "Russian Hybrid Warfare and Other Dark Arts," *War on the Rocks* [11 March 2016]. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/03/russian-hybrid-warfare-and-other-dark-arts/> [accessed 15 August 2016].

This article argues that there is no Russian hybrid warfare. In fact, what we are observing is standard conventional warfare and a confused observer.

Kofman, Michael, "Russian Performance in the Russo-Georgian War Revisited," *War on the Rocks* [11 March 2016]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/09/russian-performance-in-the-russo-georgian-war-revisited/> [accessed 5 September 2018].

Kramer, Andrew E. "Russian General Pitches 'Information' Operations as a Form of War," *The New York Times* [2 March 2019]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/02/world/europe/russia-hybrid-war-gerasimov.html> [accessed 3 March 2019].

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Landay, Jonathan and Warren Strobel, "U.S. sees bearable costs, key goals met for Russia in Syria so far", *Reuters* [28 December 2015]. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-russia-syria-idUSKBN0UB0BA20151228> [accessed 28 December 2015].

In the debate between direct and indirect intervention in the Syrian civil war this article provides support for the direct intervention approach and opposes comments made by President Obama in November 2015 about the eventual failure of the Russian venture into Syria.

Lanoszka, Alexander. 2016. "Russian Hybrid Warfare and Extended Deterrence in Eastern Europe," *International Affairs*, 92:1, 175–195.

Luxmoore, Matthew, "Aboard Russia's Propaganda Train Of 'Syrian War Trophies'," *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty* [28 February 2019]. <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-propaganda-train-syrian-war-trophies-/29796480.html> [accessed 3 March 2019].

Maan, Ajit and Paul Cobaugh, "How Ukrainian Narrative Identity Dominates the War of Influence: The similarities in identity layers not only insulates Ukrainians from Russian propaganda, but it also gives them a tactical advantage." *Government Technology & Services Coalition's Homeland Security Today.US* [25 August 2022]. <https://www.hstoday.us/featured/how-ukrainian-narrative-identity-dominates-the-war-of-influence/> [accessed 5 September 2022].

MacFarquhar, Neil, "Russia Says Bomb Downed Plane in Egypt and Intensifies Attacks on ISIS", *New York Times* [17 November 2015]. [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/18/world/europe/russia-plane-crash-bomb.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/18/world/europe/russia-plane-crash-bomb.html?_r=0) [accessed 17 November 2015].

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Mastriano, Douglas, project leader. *Project 1721: A U.S. Army War College Assessment on Russian*

*Strategy in Eastern Europe and How to Leverage Landpower to Maintain the Peace*. Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, March 2017.  
<http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1342> [accessed 6 April 2017].

Executive Summary: Since its occupation of Crimea, Russia has adopted an aggressive and often belligerent approach to the nations on its borders. The on-going war against Ukraine and its occupation of large portions of Georgian territory demonstrates this increasingly hostile foreign policy. However, far more dangerous to the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is the Kremlin's use of a strategy of ambiguity. In this, Moscow keeps hostilities at a low boil, leveraging a Russian diaspora, a web of complex information-campaign-trolls, to stir ethnic unrest that has the potential to destroy NATO and end the unparalleled post-World War II peace experienced in Europe. Yet, there are actions that the United States and NATO can take to prevent Russian aggression from turning into a war and Project 1721 provides the answers to this complex and dangerous security dilemma.

Matisek, Jahara, "From Little Green Men to Little Blue Helmets: Imagining the Future of Russian Aggression—and What to Do About It," *Modern Warfare Institute* [2 November 2021].  
<https://mwi.usma.edu/from-little-green-men-to-little-blue-helmets-imagining-the-future-of-russian-aggression-and-what-to-do-about-it/> [accessed 3 November 2021].

The article presents an interesting variation of the little green men approach. I recommend reading the introduction of *Stand Out of Our Light: Freedom and Resistance in the Attention Economy* ([https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/3F8D7BA2C0FE3A7126A4D9B73A89415D/9781108429092AR.pdf/Stand\\_out\\_of\\_our\\_Light.pdf?event-type=FTLA](https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/3F8D7BA2C0FE3A7126A4D9B73A89415D/9781108429092AR.pdf/Stand_out_of_our_Light.pdf?event-type=FTLA) [accessed 3 November 2021].) by James Williams to appreciate how easy it might be to pull off such a proposed scenario. The idea of the attention economy is that this is the economy about which humans will compete in this century. My extrapolation of the thesis and not the author's necessarily.

★ Meakins, Joss, "The Other Side of the COIN: The Russians in Chechnya," *Small Wars Journal* [13 January 2017]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-other-side-of-the-coin-the-russians-in-chechnya> [accessed 22 February 2017].

This article calls into question notions about what makes a successful counter-insurgency campaign. The author is up front with the attitude that this would not work for the US, but it should cause thinkers to question notions about what brings stability.

Mehta, Aaron, "How the US has 'learned a lot' about Russian capabilities in Syria," *Defense News* [27 August 2018]. <https://www.defensenews.com/air/2018/08/27/how-the-us-has-learned-a-lot-about-russian-capabilities-in-syria/> [accessed 28 August 2018].

Miller, James, "Putin's Attack Helicopters and Mercenaries Are Winning the War for Assad," *Foreign Policy* [30 March 2016]. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/03/30/putins-attack-helicopters-and-mercenaries-are-winning-the-war-for-assad/> [accessed 31 March 2016].

Majumdar, Dave, "The Rise of Russia's Military," *The National Interest* [19 June 2018].  
<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-rise-russias-military-26339?page=show> [accessed 20 June 2018].

Naylor, Hugh and Andrew Roth, "NATO faces new Mideast crisis after downing of Russian jet by Turkey", *Washington Post* [24 November 2015]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/turkey-downs-russian-military-aircraft-near-syrias-border/2015/11/24/9e8e0c42-9288-11e5-8aa0-5d0946560a97\\_story.html?hpid=hp\\_rhp-top-table-main\\_turkey-350am%3Ahomepage%2Fstory](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/turkey-downs-russian-military-aircraft-near-syrias-border/2015/11/24/9e8e0c42-9288-11e5-8aa0-5d0946560a97_story.html?hpid=hp_rhp-top-table-main_turkey-350am%3Ahomepage%2Fstory) [accessed 25 November 2015].

Nemtsova, Anna, "In Nagorno-Karabakh, a Bloody New War With Putin on Both Sides," *The Daily Beast* [4 April 2016]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/04/04/in-nagorno-karabakh-a-bloody-new-war-with-putin-on-both-sides.html> [accessed 5 April 2016].

Opall-Rome, Barbara, "Israeli Satellite Imagery Shows Russian Nuclear-Capable Missiles in Syria,"

*Defense News* [6 January 2017]. <http://www.defensenews.com/articles/israeli-satellite-imagery-shows-russian-nuclear-capable-missiles-in-syria> [accessed 9 January 2017].

The Russians have deployed SS-26 rockets to Syria. These are nuclear capable intermediate range missiles.

- ★ Perry, Bret, "Non-Linear Warfare in Ukraine: The Critical Role of Information Operations and Special Operations," *Small Wars Journal* [14 August 2015]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/non-linear-warfare-in-ukraine-the-critical-role-of-information-operations-and-special-opera> [accessed 5 January 2017].

An excellent article explaining the development of Russian thought regarding responses to dynamics in the current operational environment and how they have moved toward a form of MITNS. The summary of Russian "non-linear warfare" is crucial to the discussion on other applications of narrative outside the Middle East.

Peterson, Nolan, "Exclusive Front-Line Report: Modern Trench Warfare in Eastern Ukraine," *Coffee or Die* [26 October 2021]. <https://coffeeordie.com/ukraine-front-line/> [accessed 31 October 2021].

This is long (about 6000 words). It is also fascinating. The author gives excellent insight into what is happening in Ukraine. There isn't any background, so, if you don't know why people are fighting in the Donbas or even where the Donbas is, you will need to do some Wikipedia background reading.

Pryer, Douglas A. "The Pitfalls of Unsupervised Aid To Ukraine," *Inkstick Media* [26 October 2022]. <https://inkstickmedia.com/the-pitfalls-of-unsupervised-aid-to-ukraine/> [accessed 26 October 2022].

Very important points in this article. Thank you Douglas A. Pryer for writing it.

When has throwing money at a problem been an effective or efficient solution to the problem? Rhetorical question, because the answer is never.

Responsible investment has often produced desirable results. See the Apollo program or the Marshall Plan as examples of success in such endeavors. You might add the Manhattan Project, but I would reject the B-29 program which was rife with cost overruns and other management problems.

The emphasis needs to be on the word responsible when we invest money in an endeavor. Support of Ukraine is morally right, and it is proper with respect to American national security. Though I disagree with those who criticize support for Ukraine as warmongering, I also agree with and understand their concerns about the efficacy of the support already provided and the seemingly feckless strategy being employed by all elements of the U.S. federal government.

What is the plan for victory? How will the investments already provided and being considered advance that plan? How is the strategic messaging and communication aiding the support and funding?

I fear that the current defense and national leadership do not understand the combinations necessary to wage and (more importantly) to win a narrative war. To be clear, the answer isn't more money.

Renz, Bettina and Hanna Smith, editors, "After 'hybrid warfare', what next? – Understanding and responding to contemporary Russia," Finland Prime Minister's Office, 27 October 2016. <http://tietokayttoon.fi/documents/10616/0/Understanding+and+responding+to+contemporary+Russia/49bdb37f-11da-4b4a-8b0d-0e297af39abd?version=1.0> [accessed 16 November 2016].

This reports argues for a holistic look at the Russian threat and a more nuanced understanding of the threat posed by Russia than labeling their behavior "hybrid warfare." Two edited pieces provide arguments in support of this effort. One discusses the notion of moral forces in war and the second addresses Russian use of soft power.

Ripley, Tim, "Russia sets up Palmyra base," *Janes Defence Weekly* [10 May 2016]. <http://www.janes.com/article/60102/russia-sets-up-palmyra-base> [accessed 10 May 2016].

Seely, Bob, "A Definition of Contemporary Russian Conflict: How Does the Kremlin Wage War?" Russia and Eurasia Studies Centre Research Paper No. 15 (2018), The Henry Jackson Society [June 2018]. <http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/A-Definition-of-Contemporary-Russian-Conflict.pdf> [accessed 7 June 2018].

Simes, Dimitri K. "Russia and America: Destined for Conflict?" *The National Interest* [26 June 2016]. <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/russia-america-destined-conflict-16726?page=show> [accessed 4 October 2016].

Russia and America are not destined to be opponents. In fact, the decision of opposition has typically been a result of ignorant US action and Russia trying to defend their space.

Smith, Todd, "'The Greatest Threat:' Russian buildup puts US, NATO troops on edge," *Army Times* [18 September 2017], 24-27.

Snegovaya, Maria, "Putin's Information Warfare in Ukraine: Soviet Origins of Russia's Hybrid Warfare," Institute for the Study of War Russia Report 1, September 2015. <http://understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Russian%20Report%201%20Putin%27s%20Information%20Warfare%20in%20Ukraine-%20Soviet%20Origins%20of%20Russias%20Hybrid%20Warfare.pdf> [accessed 14 October 2016].

This paper explains the Russian concept of information warfare called Reflexive Control using actions in Ukraine as an example. This is important in tying MITNS to a broader global application.

Snow, Shawn, "US troops have been squaring off with Russian contractors in Syria raising worries of wider conflict," *Military Times* [6 February 2020]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2020/02/06/us-troops-have-been-squaring-off-with-russian-contractors-in-syria-raising-worries-of-wider-conflict/> [accessed 7 February 2020].

★ Snyder, Timothy, "Vladimir Putin's Hall of Mirrors: The Russian president sees the world through the lens of maskirovka and provokatsiia." *The Atlantic* [21 February 2022]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/02/putin-ukraine-invasion-maskirovka-provokatsiia/622874/> [accessed 21 February 2022].

The article includes some great comments on Russian narrative war as it progressed with respect to Ukraine.

Sparks, John, "Revealed: Russia's 'Secret Syria Mercenaries'," *Sky News* [10 August 2016]. <http://news.sky.com/story/revealed-russias-secret-syria-mercenaries-10529248> [accessed 11 August 2016].

Those interviewed for this article state that they fought as shock troops in the recapture of Palmyra from ISIS.

Tsvetkova, Maria, "Exclusive: Russia, despite draw down, shipping more to Syria than removing," *Reuters* [30 March 2016]. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-supplies-idUSKCN0WWODJ> [accessed 30 March 2016].

Tsvetkova, Maria and Anton Zverev, "Ghost soldiers: the Russians secretly dying for the Kremlin in Syria," *Reuters* [3 November 2016]. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-insight-idUSKBN12YOM6> [accessed 4 November 2016].

Are Russian soldiers fighting with the Syrian military? The answer seems to be yes, but maybe they are contractors being hired to deliver the military force.

Tucker, Patrick, "Information Warfare Looms Larger in Russia's New Security Strategy," *Defense One* [13 July 2021]. <https://www.defenseone.com/technology/2021/07/information-warfare-looms-larger-russias-new-security-strategy/183717/> [accessed 14 July 2021].

This is a simple look into Russian thought, story, and narrative. It is in the Russian narrative that it is beset and surrounded by enemies. This was well articulated by George Kennan way back in the 1940s. The Vladimir Putin story has expanded what surrounded means to include international organizations and according to this article Twitter and the internet. My point is that this reimagining of the Russian story is still quite consistent with the Russian narrative that goes back for decades and probably centuries.

U.S. Government. 2015. Russian Battlefield Development Plan (U): Tactics: Brigade and Below (Draft). Department of the Army, United States National Ground Intelligence Center.



Vershinin, Alex, "The Return of Industrial Warfare," Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) [17 June 2022]. <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/return-industrial-warfare> [accessed 30 June 2022].

Important information on the resource requirement of war in Ukraine in 2022.

Wasielewski, Philip, "The Evolving Political-Military Aims in the War in Ukraine After 100 Days," *Foreign Policy Research Institute* [9 June 2022]. <https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/06/the-evolving-political-military-aims-in-the-war-in-ukraine-after-100-days/> [accessed 13 June 2022].

A really good summary of the events and possibilities regarding the fighting in Ukraine.

I am concerned that this war will end badly for Ukraine as it becomes the first "Virtue Signal War." What I mean by the term virtue signal war is a war where people and states make bold pronouncements of support but do little with respect to action. I know that the United States has spent a lot of money on this war and that is a good thing, but nearly 32 years ago, we sent nearly three quarters of a million service members halfway around the world to defend and regain a small sheikdom that few Americans had ever heard of.

The purpose of our commitment to Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm was to demonstrate to the world and global bullies that it is unacceptable for the Melian Dialogue to be enacted in the post-Cold War world.

It still amazes me that we haven't properly stood up and committed ourselves to expelling an invader and reestablishing the borders of a state, not in the Middle East or Africa or Southeast Asia, but very much a part of Europe. This is the place about which we developed the UN charter that informs the world that aggressive war is illegal and not to be tolerated. And, here the world and the United Nations sit and tolerate it. Stunning.

Be informed and be aware.

I expect that we will be studying the reshaping of the globe as a consequence of this war for decades to come. I predicted that the war wasn't a forgone conclusion to be a defeat for Vladimir Putin in the early days and I fear that my predictions may be much more accurate than I wanted them to be.

- ★ Weiss, Michael, Holger Roonemaa, Mattias Carlsson, Liliana Botnariuc, and Pierre Vaux, "The Fallen Mercenaries in Russia's Dark Army: Former Ukrainian intelligence officers spent seven years compiling a database of Russia's notorious mercenaries. We found the parents, siblings and widows of those killed in battle," *New Lines Mag* [19 December 2021].

<https://newlinesmag.com/reportage/the-fallen-mercenaries-in-russias-dark-army/> [accessed 24 February 2022].

Excellent reporting of members of the Wagner Group, their families and the reasons for people joining the group.

Wesolowsky, Tony and Mark Krutov azen, "Activist Says Russia Using 'Hybrid Warfare' In Syria", *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty* [11 November 2015]. <http://www.rferl.org/content/russia-syria-cybersleuth-hybrid-warfare/27358490.html> [accessed 13 November 2015].

Zakem, Vera, Paul Saunders, and Daniel Antoun, "Mobilizing Compatriots: Russia's Strategy, Tactics, and Influence in the Former Soviet Union," CNA Analysis and Solutions Occasional Paper, November 2015. [https://www.cna.org/CNA\\_files/PDF/DOP-2015-U-011689-1Rev.pdf](https://www.cna.org/CNA_files/PDF/DOP-2015-U-011689-1Rev.pdf) [accessed 2 March 2017].

How the Russian government seems to be using ethnic Russians outside Russia to promote and expand Russian influence. This includes an interesting discussion on Russian information and cyber techniques.

## Other Players – Sahel

Babb, Carla, "'We Are Not Winning' Counterterror War in Sahel, US Military Leader in Africa Says," *Voice of America News* [28 February 2019]. <https://www.voanews.com/a/we-are-not-winning-counterterror-war-in-sahel-us-military-leader-in-africa-says-/4808988.html> [accessed 4 March 2019].

Brinton, Chad K. "Clausewitz in the Sahel: An Analysis of Operation Serval through the Lens of On War," *FAO Journal* [6 January 2021].

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Burke, Jason, "US special forces deaths in Niger lift veil on shadow war against Islamists in Sahel," *The Guardian* [15 September 2017]. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/15/sahel-niger-us-special-forces-islamists> [accessed 16 October 2017].

Castellanos, Miguel, "Countering lies with truth: Battling terrorist propaganda in East Africa," *Military Times* [8 November 2019].

<https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2019/11/08/countering-lies-with-truth-battling-terrorist-propaganda-in-east-africa/> [accessed 9 November 2019].

- ★ Davies, Firlie and Alastair Leithead, "The war in the desert: Why the Sahara is terror's new front line," *BBC News* [21 June 2018]. [https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/war\\_in\\_the\\_desert](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/war_in_the_desert) [accessed 22 June 2018].

A great single-source primer on problems in the Sahel. Two of my recently graduated students are from Nigeria and Mali. This article provides excellent insight into the struggles in those countries and the region.

Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed, Jacob Zenn, Sarah Sheaffer, and Sandro Bejdic, "Evolving Terror: The Development of Jihadist Operations Targeting Western Interests in Africa," *Foundation for the Defense of Democracies*, February 2018.

[http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/REPORTS\\_EvolvingTerror.pdf](http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/REPORTS_EvolvingTerror.pdf) [accessed 27 February 2018].

Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed, "Spike in African Terrorism Highlights the Importance of Jihadist Innovation," *War on the Rocks* [26 February 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/02/spike-african-terrorism-highlights-importance-jihadist-innovation/> [accessed 27 February 2018].

Hassan, Hamdy, "The Making of a Mobile Caliphate State in the African Sahel," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Ethnicity*, Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd. 2019. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-0242-8\\_158-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-0242-8_158-1) or [https://www.academia.edu/40203832/The\\_Making\\_of\\_a\\_Mobile\\_Caliphate\\_State\\_in\\_the\\_African\\_Sahel](https://www.academia.edu/40203832/The_Making_of_a_Mobile_Caliphate_State_in_the_African_Sahel) [accessed 1 January 2021].

Morgan, Wesley, "Behind the secret U.S. war in Africa," *Politico* [2 July 2018]. <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/07/02/secret-war-africa-pentagon-664005> [accessed 3 July 2018].

Parkinson, Joe and Mackenzie Knowles-Coursin, "'A Nest of Spies': Niger's Deserts Become Front Line of Fight Against Jihadism," *The Wall Street Journal* [15 October 2018]. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-nest-of-spies-how-poverty-stricken-niger-is-becoming-a-security-hub-for-the-west-1537176601> [accessed 17 October 2018].

Reuters, "How a Herdsman Became the Jihadist Who Killed US Soldiers in Niger," *Voice of America News* [12 November 2017]. <https://www.voanews.com/a/niger-herdsman-jihadist-us-soldiers/4111534.html> [accessed 15 November 2017].

Weis, Caleb, "Analysis: Jihadist attacks on the rise in northern Burkina Faso," *Long War Journal* [2

October 2017]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/10/analysis-jihadist-attacks-on-the-rise-in-northern-burkina-faso.php> [accessed 3 October 2017].

## Other Players – Saudi Arabia

Agence France-Presse, "Saudi threatens nations who back Yemen probe," *al-Monitor* [27 September 2017]. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/contents/afp/2017/09/yemen-conflict-saudi-un-rights-probe.html> [accessed 27 September 2017].

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## The Region

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Providing in depth understanding of Tunisia's challenges in integrating economic opportunities across the whole of the country. Having traveled in Tunisia, I recognize the challenges.

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This has some great information.

In short, there are costs to bad decisions poorly executed.

It should not surprise anyone that when the United States does something that is done poorly then everything associated with the United States suffers in comparison. This report addresses a hit to the ideas of representative government (I hesitate to use the word democracy as that word is misused and poorly understood globally and at home) as well as an increased respect and appreciation (even desire) for authoritarian rule. Not good.

The 2003 invasion of Iraq may have been a bad decision (I supported it at the time and still believe that there was value in toppling Saddam Hussein), but it was horribly executed beyond the initial invasion and operational success. The withdrawal from Afghanistan may be a bad (or a good) idea, but it is being horribly and embarrassingly executed. These things matter.

When a government as large and influential as the United States makes an error, it cannot get away by saying oops or I'm sorry. We have to be better in making the decision and then in how it is done. I would like us to always do right things, but I will settle for always doing things right.

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Detsch, Jack, "Middle East upheaval casts a shadow over 'Arab NATO'," *al-Monitor* [4 November 2018].

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★ Durso, James, "Washington and a Changing Middle East: A Dramatically Shifting Narrative?" *Defense.info* [13 April 2023]. <https://defense.info/featured-story/2023/04/washington-and-a-changing-middle-east-a-dramatically-shifting-narrative/> [accessed 14 April 2023].

This is a great summary of the U.S. problems in the Middle East. A must-read expression of how the narrative space is changing in the Middle East as expressed through actions, decisions, and events on the ground.

The article lists the failures and collapse of U.S. primacy in the region, and it should concern EVERYONE.

The part that doesn't really get addressed, though not the point of the article, is where the U.S. failed as it mostly lists the failures themselves. I don't think the U.S. has had a workable and desirable message for the region for decades. The U.S. government makes the mistake of seeking counter-narrative efforts, but without a positive narrative. It criticizes local leaders without offering something manifestly better as an option. If one watches Al Jazeera news about the United States, I expect that America looks like a dystopian hellscape to the region. Why would that sell well?

China, on the other hand has success in the recent Winter Olympics and what appears to be wins all over the place. The Middle East doesn't care that China is a bully and a sort of global slumlord and that all of its

neighbors hate it. That is something they will only come to realize once the relationships are no longer beneficial and the relationships with China will always benefit those in power in small countries since China pays kickbacks better than does the West.

America's strength is its alliances. When we do it right, as we have done multiple times in our past, we are an actual partner. China doesn't have allies, nor does Russia. They have tributaries and subservient vassals. The U.S. has been a bad ally over most of the last two decades as it has variably criticized and publicly shamed our Middle East partners while demanding for its military forces free oil, free access, and unconstrained action from their sovereign territories.

My final point is about Afghanistan. The U.S. spent twenty years and it made the country worse and no one in government in DC (other than the SIGAR) admits as much. It isn't about the withdrawal though that was a visual reminder of U.S. incompetence; it was about the twenty years of failed policies; fraud, waste, and abuse; and general ignorance of the country - after twenty years. How could we still not know Afghanistan? I think that the regional players believe that Washington will never understand them, so why bother.

Sorry for the rant, but I needed to get it out.

Exum, Andrew, "Gulf Leaders Still Love Trump," *The Atlantic* [15 May 2017].

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/05/gulf-trump-emirates/526626/> [accessed 16 May 2017].

Information on the upcoming UAE Crown Prince visit to the US.

Fetterolf, Janell and Jacob Poushter, "Key Middle East Publics See Russia, Turkey and U.S. All Playing Larger Roles in Region: Most do not expect Syrian war to end in 2018," Pew Research Center Global Attitudes and Trends [11 December 2017]. <http://www.pewglobal.org/2017/12/11/key-middle-east-publics-see-russia-turkey-and-u-s-all-playing-larger-roles-in-region/> [accessed 24 April 2018].

- ★ Feuer, Sarah and Carmit Valensi, "Arab Spring 2.0? Making Sense of the Protests Sweeping the Region," The Institute for National Security Studies, *INSS Insight* No 1235, 1 December 2019. <https://www.inss.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/No.-1235.pdf> [accessed 1 December 2019].

This is the best single article explanation on current protests. There is a lot going on the Middle East and this article places it in comprehensible context.

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Gambrell, Jon, "Qatar diplomatic crisis engulfs a major US military base," *Military Times* [14 September 2017]. <http://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2017/09/14/qatar-diplomatic-crisis-engulfs-a-major-us-military-base/> [accessed 15 September 2017].

Gambrell, Jon, "Qatar's emir warns against military action in Gulf dispute," *Military Times* [29 October 2017]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2017/10/29/qatars-emir-warns-against-military-action-in-gulf-dispute/> [accessed 30 October 2017].

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Gorvett, Jonathan, "Saudi canal plans signal Qatar crisis still raging," *Asia Times* [22 July 2018]. <http://www.atimes.com/article/saudi-canal-plans-signal-qatar-crisis-still-raging/> [accessed 23 July 2018].

Gozanky, Yoel and Efraim Halevy, "Oman: The End of the Qaboos Era," *The Institute for National Security*

*Studies*, INSS Insight No 1246, 13 January 2020. <https://www.inss.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/No.-1246.pdf> [accessed 14 January 2020].

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An Egyptian diplomat expresses the first regional concern as Arab-Israeli peace.

Guzansky, Yoel, "Sparta in the Gulf: The Growing Regional Clout of the United Arab Emirates," *The Institute for National Security Studies*, INSS Insight No 882, 8 January 2017. [http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/No.%20882%20-%20Guzansky%20on%20UAE\\_website.pdf](http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/No.%20882%20-%20Guzansky%20on%20UAE_website.pdf) [accessed 16 January 2017].

Short summary of UAE's role and status in the region. The author explains some of the complexity while still making it comprehensible.

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This is one of two responses to the articles written by Cyrus Mahboubian. Great information on Syria as a rebuttal.

Insinna, Valerie, "Here are all the defense deals announced at Dubai Airshow," *Defense News* [15 November 2017]. <https://www.defensenews.com/digital-show-dailies/dubai-air-show/2017/11/15/here-are-all-the-defense-deals-announced-at-dubai-airshow/> [accessed 16 November 2017].

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International Crisis Group, "Somalia and the Gulf Crisis," *International Crisis Group Africa Report*, Number 260, 5 June 2018. [https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/260-somalia-and-the-gulf-crisis\\_0.pdf](https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/260-somalia-and-the-gulf-crisis_0.pdf) [accessed 5 June 2018].

Interview with Tunisian Prime Minister Chahad, "Tunisian Prime Minister Chahed: 'Terror No Longer Has a Nationality'," *Spiegel Online* [9 January 2017]. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/tunisian-prime-minister-chahed-terror-has-no-nationality-a-1128955.html> [accessed 11 January 2017].

The PM is one of the youngest rulers in the Arab world and he provides a fascinating perspective of the problems in Tunisia (economic and security) since the end of the Arab Spring. The titular comment is the most noteworthy, but he also addresses problems with employment of young men and debt debates with the IMF created, in part, by international arms purchases.

Joscelyn, Thomas, "Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb squadron ambushed in Libya," *The Long War Journal* [30 November 2015]. <http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/11/aqim-squadron->



[ambushed-in-libya.php](#) [accessed 1 December 2015].

The fighting in Libya is as complex as anywhere else. Here one faction ambushes and kills the leader of the local AQIM affiliate.

Joscelyn, Thomas and Caleb Weiss, "US designates al Qaeda's branch in Mali as terror organization," *The Long War Journal* [5 September 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/09/us-designates-al-qaedas-branch-in-mali-as-terror-organization.php> [accessed 6 September 2018].

Kington, Tom, "UAE allegedly using Chinese drones for deadly airstrikes in Libya," *Defense News* [2 May 2019]. <https://www.defensenews.com/unmanned/2019/05/02/uae-allegedly-using-chinese-drones-for-deadly-airstrikes-in-libya/> [accessed 2 May 2019].

Knights, Michael, "Contesting Facts on the Ground in Iraq," *War on the Rocks* [25 August 2016]. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/08/contesting-facts-on-the-ground-in-iraq/> [accessed 25 August 2016].

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Kohut, Andrew. Testimony before the U.S. House International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations "Arab and Muslim Perceptions of the United States," 10 November 2005. <http://www.pewresearch.org/2005/11/10/arab-and-muslim-perceptions-of-the-united-states/> [accessed 24 April 2018].

Larter, David B. and Stephen Losey, "Trump tweets put 'nerve center' of ISIS war in the middle of Qatar dispute," *Military Times* [6 June 2017]. <http://www.militarytimes.com/articles/trump-tweets-put-nerve-center-of-isis-war-in-the-middle-of-qatar-dispute> [accessed 7 June 2017].

Lynch, Justin and Robbie Gramer, "Arab States Foment Sudan Chaos While U.S. Stands By," *Foreign Policy* [5 June 2019]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/05/arab-states-foment-sudan-chaos-while-u-s-stands-by-sudan-khartoum-protests-violent-crackdown-saudi-arabia-united-arab-emirates-egypt-democracy-push/> [accessed 10 June 2019].

★ Mahboubian, Cyrus, "Washington's Sunni Myth and the Civil Wars in Syria and Iraq," *War on the Rocks* [16 August 2016]. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/08/washingtons-sunni-myth-and-the-civil-wars-in-syria-and-iraq/> [accessed 16 August 2016].

★ Mahboubian, Cyrus, "Washington's Sunni Myth and the Middle East Undone," *War on the Rocks* [23 August 2016]. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/08/washingtons-sunni-myth-and-the-middle-east-undone/> [accessed 25 August 2016].

The author, under a pseudonym offers a different perspective of the dynamics roiling the Middle East. He does a good job of arguing against a misplaced sense of black and white that is demonstrated by those in Washington DC and other capitals. He does seem to overly skew the colors though when it comes to the dynamics in Iraq. Regardless this article is worth the read if only because it gives a different perspective from many other articles. This is a two article combination.

Malley, Robert, "The Unwanted Wars: Why the Middle East Is More Combustible Than Ever," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2019 [2 October 2019]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2019-10-02/unwanted-wars> [accessed 7 October 2019].

I completely disagree with the tone and many of the implications and assertions in this article. That said, the author has some real experience with policy in the Middle East and it is worth appreciating his perspective.

My disagreements include the following.

- Nations in the Middle East are not as inclined toward war with each other as the author suggests. They are very interested in fighting non-state actors and using non-state actors as proxies to fight other states, but that is not the same thing as what is being asserted. The states recognize the harm of state on state war and that is why it is being so assiduously avoided.

- Violence is a form of communication. The various actors are communicating and it is necessary communication. It is uncertain how this plays out, but artificially freezing the region through an imposed settlement will not resolve the issues any better than the current violence. It is sad for me to say as I love the region and the people who live there, but there needs to come a time when they are tired of killing each other. When that happens there will be peace.
- The Obama Administration did not know what it was doing in the Middle East any better than the current administration. My experience serving in multiple countries in the region during different presidential administrations taught me how little Washington DC, under every administration, understands the Middle East.

Manek, Nizar, "U.A.E. Military Base in Breakaway Somaliland Seen Open by June," *Bloomberg* [6 November 2018]. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-11-06/u-a-e-military-base-in-breakaway-somaliland-seen-open-by-june> [accessed 6 November 2018].

Mazzetti, Mark and Eric Schmitt, "As It Fights ISIS, Pentagon Seeks String of Bases Overseas," *New York Times* [10 December 2015]. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/11/us/politics/pentagon-seeks-string-of-overseas-bases-to-contain-isis.html> [accessed 10 December 2015].

Some suggestions of actual locations are included in the article, but this seems to be floating ideas to the media.

Mazzetti, Mark Jeffrey Gettleman, and Eric Schmitt, "In Somalia, U.S. Escalates a Shadow War," *New York Times* [16 October 2016]. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/16/world/africa/obama-somalia-secret-war.html> [accessed 16 October 2016].

Brief description of the conduct of war in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. This a good example of the expansion of warfare beyond that understood by the American people. This also illustrates US ignorance of the incentives-based system of exclusionary systems of governance.

McVeigh, Karen, "Child soldier recruits double in one year in Middle East and North Africa," *The Guardian* [11 September 2017]. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/sep/11/child-soldier-recruits-double-in-one-year-in-middle-east-and-north-africa> [accessed 12 September 2017].

Mouchantaf, Chirine, "What's driving the Middle East's armored vehicles market?" *Defense News* [2 May 2018]. <https://www.defensenews.com/global/mideast-africa/2018/05/02/whats-driving-the-middle-east-armored-vehicles-market/> [accessed 8 May 2018].

Mustafa, Awad, "Saudi-Led Islamic Military Coalition Formed to Fight Terrorism," *Defense News* [14 December 2015]. <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/2015/12/14/saudi-led-islamic-military-coalition-formed-to-fight-terrorism/77318694/> [accessed 15 December 2015].

This article includes a list of the countries involved.

Newton, Creede, "ISIS Gains a Foothold in Gaza," *The Daily Beast* [9 December 2015]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/12/09/isis-gains-a-foothold-in-gaza.html> [accessed 9 December 2015].

This article is very good in that it conveys the challenges of ISIS spreading based off frustration. In this case the frustration is from the problem of being in the world's largest prison.

Opall-Rome, Barbara, "Pentagon eyes intimate R&D tie-up with UAE based on US-Israel model," *Defense News* [15 November 2017]. <https://www.defensenews.com/digital-show-dailies/dubai-air-show/2017/11/15/pentagon-eyes-intimate-rampd-tie-up-with-uae-based-on-us-israel-model/> [accessed 16 November 2017].

Pawlyk, Oriana, "Air Force Acknowledges Clandestine Base in UAE," *DoD Buzz Online Defense and Acquisition Journal by Military.com* [28 August 2017]. <https://www.dodbuzz.com/2017/08/28/air-force-acknowledges-clandestine-base-in-uae/> [accessed 29 August 2017].

Pollack, Kenneth M. "The U.S. Has Wasted Billions of Dollars on Failed Arab Armies," *Foreign Policy* [31 January 2019]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/31/the-u-s-has-wasted-billions-of-dollars-on-failed-arab-armies/> [accessed 1 February 2019].

Rana, Muhammad Amir, "Religion, Nationalism and Insurgency in Balochistan," *Dawn* [14 July 2019]. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1493929/religion-nationalism-and-insurgency-in-balochistan> [accessed 21 July 2019].

Rempfer, Kyle, "Russia asked to joint operate a US base in Syria. Coalition says hard pass," *Military Times* [6 December 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/12/06/russia-asked-to-joint-operate-a-us-base-in-syria-coalition-says-hard-pass/> [accessed 8 December 2018].

Reuters, "US bids to revive 'Arab NATO' alliance as part of measures against Iran," *Deutsche Welle* [29 July 2018]. <https://www.dw.com/en/us-bids-to-revive-arab-nato-alliance-as-part-of-measures-against-iran/a-44866600> [accessed 30 July 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "Pakistan laughingly says its fight against terrorists is 'unmatched in the world'," *Long War Journal* [25 November 2017]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/11/pakistan-laughingly-says-its-fight-against-terrorists-is-unmatched-in-the-world.php> [accessed 27 November 2017].

Roggio, Bill, "US military against targets Shabaab in central Somalia," *Long War Journal* [28 November 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/11/us-military-against-targets-shabaab-in-central-somalia.php> [accessed 2 December 2018].

Rosen, Armin, "A nervous Saudi Arabia just launched a massive military exercise," *Business Insider* [18 February 2016]. <http://www.businessinsider.com/saudi-arabia-just-launched-a-massive-military-exercise-2016-2> [accessed 19 February 2016].

Roule, Norman, "The New Risks, Realities and Opportunities in the Middle East," *The Cipher Brief* [2 May 2018]. <https://www.thecipherbrief.com/article/middle-east/new-risks-realities-opportunities-middle-east> [accessed 4 May 2018].

Sanderson, Thomas M. "From the Ferghana Valley to Syria and Beyond: A Brief History of Central Asian Foreign Fighters," *Center for Strategic & International Studies* [5 January 2018]. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/ferghana-valley-syria-and-beyond-brief-history-central-asian-foreign-fighters> [accessed 10 January 2018].

Sebright, Danny, "The US and UAE forge a new path on defense [Commentary]," *Defense News* 17 May 2017]. <http://www.defensenews.com/articles/us-and-uae-priorities-closely-aligned-commentary> [accessed 18 May 2017].

Op-Ed on the new defense cooperation agreement between the UAE and US. Short on details, but it has lots of value. The author is a US business leader in UAE.

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## United States Doctrine

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- 2 The ideology behind al-Qaida and the Islamic State 27
- 4 The history of the Islamic State: from Abu Musab al-Zarqawi to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi 54
- 21 Operation Enduring Freedom–Philippines: lessons in special warfare 280
- 24 Defeating the Islamic State: Special Operations Forces in Syria 323

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★ CDR Salamander, "McMaster: a Whole of Government Failure," U.S. Naval Institute Blog [17 November 2021]. <https://blog.usni.org/posts/2021/11/17/mcmaster-a-whole-of-government-failure> [accessed 27 June 2022].

I apologize for sending this out more than seven months after publication, but I am going through my email inbox to clean things up and this was in there. It is excellent! Read it. It isn't long. There is a video link in the blog that is worth connecting to and watching H.R. McMaster's comments. I agree with him.

Relating this older article to the present is pretty easy. U.S. current actions in Ukraine demonstrate a similar lack of seriousness. It is unclear what we think we are doing when we get involved in war. If we aren't trying to win – to achieve a better future than the existing condition – then what are we fighting for? Why be involved in the war at all? Such a lack of seriousness lends support to the isolationist voices in the United States. I am not an isolationist, but I am adamantly opposed to wasting human life and American treasure through foolish and feckless endeavors that don't improve our interests or influence. In my opinion, such fecklessness does greater harm than would an isolationist policy.

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The National Military Strategy for 2017 will be classified to withhold information from the 4+1 threats and to address the five domains ("Four plus one" refers to four nation-states — Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea — plus the enduring but ever-mutating problem of Islamic extremism, once exemplified by al-Qaeda but now embodied by the so-called Islamic State, aka Daesh. The five domains are the land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace). The key point is the quote "Our traditional approach where we are either at peace or at war is insufficient to deal with that dynamic," Dunford said. The current reality is more "an adversarial competition with a military dimension short of armed conflict."

Clarke, Arthur C. "Superiority," Originally published 1951. "Superiority" was included in Clarke's 1953 anthology *Expedition to Earth*, the 1981 anthology *The 7 Cardinal Virtues of Science Fiction* (where it represented temperance), and the 2001 anthology *The Best Military Science Fiction of the 20th Century*. [http://www.mayofamily.com/RLM/txt\\_Clarke\\_Superiority.html](http://www.mayofamily.com/RLM/txt_Clarke_Superiority.html) [accessed 16 March 2016].

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This is a controversial article and one that may make readers uncomfortable. In recommending this article I am not stating agreement with its findings or the author's sourcing or arguments. I think that this brings to light critical questions about what sustained and repeated exposure to combat stress and horrific experiences can do to the human spirit in terms of moral behavior. I recommend that one read the book *With the Old Breed* by E.B. Sledge to understand that the behaviors discussed in this article are neither new for Americans nor as aberrational as some might wish to believe.

US Congress. "Renewed Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress." Congressional Research Service [5 August 2019]. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R43838.pdf> [accessed 16 September 2019].

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Dawdy, Michael J. Governance as a Weapon: Advising the Shadow Government in Unconventional Warfare. *Small Wars Journal* [20 July 2016]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/governance-as-a-weapon-advising-the-shadow-government-in-unconventional-warfare> [accessed 22 July 2016].

Detsch, Jack, "Top US general's retirement marks turning point in Mideast operations," *al-Monitor* [8 July 2019]. <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/07/top-general-votel-retirement-turning-point-mideast.html> [accessed 9 July 2019].

The article includes a discussion on the success of by-with-through with respect to the defeat of ISIS and credits GEN Votel's leadership in bringing this approach to the ISIS fight. I am not sure that I agree with the assessment of either the success of the method as a long-term approach worthy of future emulation or of the direct role of GEN Votel in bringing this approach. It was happening before he took over.

Detsch, Jack and Robbie Gramer, "State Department Floats Plans to Reshuffle Counter-Islamic State Envoy Office," *Foreign Policy* [23 February 2021]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/02/23/islamic-state-envoy-coalition-state-department/> [accessed 24 February 2021].

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★ Freeman, Chas W., Jr. "The End of the American Empire," *War on the Rocks* [11 April 2016]. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/04/the-end-of-the-american-empire/> [accessed 14 April 2016].

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Friedman, Uri, "America Has Come Full Circle in the Middle East," *The Atlantic* [24 January 2020]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/01/america-intervene-middle-east-iraq/605299/> [accessed 27 January 2020].

The author provides a connection with U.S. involvement in the Middle East that most people do not know: the 1958 U.S. action in Lebanon. The main points of the article are:

- U.S. involvement in the Middle East follows a pattern.
- Great power conflict causes a response within the Middle East.
- It is easier to begin an intervention than it is to end one.
- Most U.S. intervention happens without a broader regional appreciation or strategy. The focus tended to be managing specific problems.
- George W. Bush was the exception in that he sought to eliminate challenges rather than managing them.

Ganor, Boaz, "A New Counter-Terrorism Doctrine or a New President," *International Institute for Counter-Terrorism* Position Paper [16 January 2017]. <https://trailer.web-view.net/Show/0X745AD52CFA0ADEF285054DBDCF3A69B6EBAC323126BF4FC19FA641D7D4974141552835B8FF6C759D.htm> [accessed 16 January 2017].

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[troops-can-stay-in-iraq-syria-indefinitely/](#) [accessed 26 February 2018].

Hanson, Victor Davis, "The Postwar Order is Over: And not because Trump Wrecked It," *National Review* [29 May 2018]. <https://www.nationalreview.com/2018/05/post-war-order-over-not-caused-by-trump-foreign-policy/> [accessed 2 June 2018].

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Harris, Shane and Nancy A. Youssef, "Exclusive: Whistleblowers Warned Top Spy About Skewed ISIS Intel", *The Daily Beast* [15 February 2016]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/02/15/exclusive-whistleblowers-warned-top-spy-about-skewed-isis-intel.html> [accessed 16 February 2016].

- ★ Heftye, Erik, "Multi-Domain Confusion: All Domains Are Not Created Equal," *The Strategy Bridge* [26 May 2018]. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/5/26/multi-domain-confusion-all-domains-are-not-created-equal> [accessed 31 May 2018].

The author provides excellent insight for the problems of semantics in trying to communicate intent and effect.

Houck, Caroline, "Dunford: Six Months From Now, ISIS Will Have 'Less Credibility'," *Defense One* [26 September 2017]. <http://www.defenseone.com/threats/2017/09/dunford-six-months-now-isis-will-have-less-credibility/141300/> [accessed 27 September 2017].

Huessy, Peter, "Back to Nuclear Basics: Does Unilateral Restraint Work?" *Real Clear Defense* [13 March 2017]. [http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2017/03/13/back\\_to\\_nuclear\\_basics\\_does\\_unilateral\\_restraint\\_work\\_110957.html](http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2017/03/13/back_to_nuclear_basics_does_unilateral_restraint_work_110957.html) [accessed 12 April 2017].

This is a good summary of US nuclear investment and current capability.

Hughes, Patrick M. "On Convergence, Emergence, and Complexity," *Military Review*, pages 42-46 [March-April 2016]. [http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview\\_20160430\\_art010.pdf](http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20160430_art010.pdf) [accessed 18 April 2016].

Johnson, David, "An Army Trying to Shake Itself from Intellectual Slumber, Part I: Learning from the 1970s," *War on the Rocks* [2 February 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/02/army-trying-shake-intellectual-slumber-part-learning-1970s/> [accessed 8 February 2018].

Judson, Jen, "US Army Putting Finishing Touches on Autonomous Systems Strategy," *Defense News* [17 March 2016]. <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/show-daily/ausa-global-force/2016/03/17/army-autonomous-system-strategy/81897736/> [accessed 20 March 2016].

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Kay, Larry, "Innovation of Military Thought in the Postmodern Warfare Era," *Small Wars Journal* [2 February 2017]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/innovation-of-military-thought-in-the-postmodern-warfare-era> [accessed 6 February 2017].

The author makes the following arguments: 1. Contemporary Russian political-military doctrine was on full display in 2016 US elections. 2. Effective disinformation campaign rebuts Clausewitz's trinity by severing the dialectic interrelationship between the government, the people and the military. 3. Postmodern warfare is multi-domain, borderless competition dominated by the ability of state and non-state actors to manipulate information through metanarratives to decisively overwhelm or undermine adversaries, focusing on non-

combatants for sources of internal and adversarial political dissidence. 4. The United States military urgently requires an innovation of military thought and a new theory that incorporates the dynamics of the postmodern environment.

- ★ Khan, Azmat, "The Civilian Casualty Files: Hidden Pentagon Records Reveal Patterns of Failure in Deadly Airstrikes," *The New York Times* [18 December 2021].  
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/18/us/airstrikes-pentagon-records-civilian-deaths.html> [accessed 20 December 2021].

This is an important article. It is a long one of about 10,000 words.

Like a related article, also from *The New York Times*, it is infuriating as well as excellent. I give my two points for being infuriating and a third point for why it is excellent. I address them in order of importance.

First, this article and others like it express something truly problematic in current conflict – Western (and particularly American) media refuse to acknowledge their role in generating, encouraging, directing, and shaping conflict. They like to act as if they are above the fray and somehow free of the responsibilities and ugliness of conflict, but they are, in many ways, more important than any other component of conflict as it exists as part of twenty-first century narrative war. Political and military leaders often feel propelled toward actions by media coverage of events. For example, Barack Obama would not have fought ISIS as he did without a media drumbeat to do so. The drumbeat for actions usually leads to removal of strictures and controls on those actions and those actions have consequences.

Second, war is hell. I have recently said this in another post, but it is true. WWII is often trumpeted as a *good war* or a noble crusade in part because the media hold up the Nazis as the worst villains ever. In 2014 and continuing to the present, ISIS is typically characterized as worse than Nazis. The media acts ignorant of what was done in fighting the Nazis. We firebombed cities. We indiscriminately killed millions of people. That was done because leaders justified their actions as necessary to defeat this enemy. Those labeling opponents Nazis or anything similar need to be aware of what that meant in the past and to what actions such labels may lead. By definition, in war people die, even innocent people. This is why initiating war must be a controlled and tightly governed affair. It is why the U.S. Congress must be involved because the people, as represented by that body must be in agreement to commit these atrocities in their name. If not, then don't go to war because you cannot wage war cleanly.

Third, the author does well to point out that the U.S. military has a learning problem. It does not seem to be able to adapt from one mistake such that it prevents the conduct of another. Part of the learning problem that the article illuminates is about confirmation bias. The U.S. military (and every other military with which I have worked) doesn't train people to understand the opponent, the partner, or the local populace. Therefore, decisions about insurgent or terrorist behavior should usually be suspect. This isn't a problem of rank of who gets to make the decision as generals aren't much better at understanding the opponent or local culture than are sergeants. Part of the problem with the technology is that it offers a siren song that the work needed to obtain such an understanding isn't necessary since the technology can see everything.

Klay, Phil, "Two Decades of War Have Eroded the Morale of America's Troops," *The Atlantic* [May 2018 Issue – released on 15 April 2018]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/05/left-behind/556844/> [accessed 16 April 2018].

Knaub, Zayn, "Organizational Agility: Winning in Today's Complex Environment," *The Strategy Bridge* [21 April 2017]. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/4/21/organizational-agility-winning-in-todays-complex-environment> [accessed 20 April 2018].

Koven, Barnett S. "Emulating US Counterinsurgency Doctrine: Barriers for Developing Country Forces, Evidence from Peru," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2016.1154462 [28 April 2016]. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2016.1154462> [accessed 14 June 2016].

Kristian, Bonnie, "Trump's dangerous expansion of executive war powers," *Politico* [3 April 2017]. <http://www.politico.com/agenda/story/2017/04/trumps-dangerous-expansion-of-executive-war-powers-000387> [accessed 4 April 2017].

The problems raised in this article are accurate and important and should have been raised over and over again since the US withdrawal from Iraq as no other operation received a separate AUMF.

Lardner, Richard, "US Commander Previews Revised Rebel Training Effort in Syria," *ABC News* [9 March 2016]. <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/us-commander-backs-revised-train-equip-program-syria-37519773> [accessed 10 March 2016].

Brief summary on previous program to train Syrian rebels and debate on future program to do something similar. The implied focus is on technical skills rather than tactical proficiency.

Lundy, Mike and Rich Creed, "The Return of U.S. Army Field Manual 3-0, Operations," *Military Review*, November-December 2017, 14-21. <http://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/November-December-2017/The-Return-of-US-Army-Field-Manual-3-0-Operations/> [accessed 8 November 2017].

Lyle, Dave "Sugar," "Fifth Generation Warfare and Other Myths: Clarifying Muddled Thinking in our Current Defense Debates," *Over the Horizon: Multi-Domain Operations & Strategies* [4 December 2017]. <https://overthehorizonmdos.com/2017/12/04/fifth-generation-warfare-and-other-myths-clarifying-muddled-thinking-in-our-current-defense-debates/> [accessed 3 March 2018].

Macgregor, Douglas, "Testimony to the Air-Land Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee," *U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee* [15 March 2017]. [https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Macgregor\\_03-15-17.pdf](https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Macgregor_03-15-17.pdf) [accessed 6 April 2017].

This is the traditional argument against the problems regarding the focus on COIN and stability operations.

Mahmod, Hoshman A. and Arez A. Abdullah, "An Examination of the U.S. Military Intervention Against the Islamic State in Iraq," *Koya University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (KUJHSS)*, Volume 4, Issue 1, 2021, 21-27 [30 June 2021]. [http://scholar.google.com/scholar\\_url?url=http://jhss.koyauniversity.org/index.php/jhss/article/download/473/137&hl=en&sa=X&d=5359107850108729812&ei=aQv0YIPGlueHy9YP\\_du42AE&scisig=AAGBfm2ixGR0fZxm6I7rYpWFLX2Kk3ADw&nossl=1&oi=scholar&rt&hist=DaXjDx8AAAAJ:5340344254310740919:AAGBfm0TL-Fk8CfKkVtQzD5A-dNEVpo\\_Q&html=&folt=rel&fols=](http://scholar.google.com/scholar_url?url=http://jhss.koyauniversity.org/index.php/jhss/article/download/473/137&hl=en&sa=X&d=5359107850108729812&ei=aQv0YIPGlueHy9YP_du42AE&scisig=AAGBfm2ixGR0fZxm6I7rYpWFLX2Kk3ADw&nossl=1&oi=scholar&rt&hist=DaXjDx8AAAAJ:5340344254310740919:AAGBfm0TL-Fk8CfKkVtQzD5A-dNEVpo_Q&html=&folt=rel&fols=) [accessed 19 July 2021]

This is not very well written and terribly informative from a scholarly perspective, but it is written by a couple of Kurdish scholars and therefore has an interesting perspective.

Marine Corps Times Staff Report, "This viral video caught a California high school teacher's ugly rant about military recruiters," *Marine Corps Times* [28 January 2018]. <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/01/28/this-viral-video-caught-a-california-high-school-teachers-ugly-rant-about-military-recruiters/> [accessed 14 February 2018].

In addition to this report which links to the cellphone video, the file includes a transcript of the comments.

Matissek, Jahara and Ian Bertram, "The Death of American Conventional Warfare: It's the Political Willpower, Stupid," *The Strategy Bridge* [5 November 2017]. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/11/5/the-death-of-american-conventional-warfare-its-the-political-willpower-stupid> [accessed 8 November 2017].

Mattis, James N. Memorandum Designating Information as a Joint Function. Office of the Secretary of Defense, Washington DC [15 September 2017].

Maurer, Kevin, "She Kills People From 7,850 Miles Away," *The Daily Beast* [18 October 2015]. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/10/18/she-kills-people-from-7-850-miles-away.html> [accessed 19 October 2015].

Maxwell, David S., "Congress Has Embraced Unconventional Warfare: Will the US Military and The Rest of the US Government?", *Small Wars Journal* [29 December 2015].

<http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/congress-has-embraced-unconventional-warfare-will-the-us-military-and-the-rest-of-the-us-go> [accessed 30 December 2015].

The article includes links to information on unconventional warfare.

- ★ Maxwell, David, "Lessons from the Philippines: Irregular Warfare in Action," *Modern Warfare Institute* [7 October 2021]. <https://mwi.usma.edu/lessons-from-the-philippines-irregular-warfare-in-action/> [accessed 8 October 2021].

Excellent lessons that include the importance of the individual with proper skills and motivation in addition to a general importance of people and recognition of the importance of the human dimension of war.

- ★ Maze, Rick, "Radical Change is Coming: Gen. Mark A. Milley Not Talking About Just Tinkering Around the Edges," Association of the United States Army website [13 December 2016]. <https://www.ausa.org/articles/radical-change-coming-gen-mark-milley-not-talking-about-just-tinkering-around-edges> [accessed 23 December 2016].

Comments from both the Army Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Army that captures their willingness to relook a lot of ways of doing business. The question in these sorts of articles is always will they actually do anything different? Changing the US military bureaucracy is painful and requires diligent and unrelenting effort. Very few Chiefs of Staff have the time or the wasta to effect that kind of change.

McCurley, T. Mark, "I Was a Drone Warrior for 11 Years. I Regret Nothing." *Politico* [18 October 2015]. <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/10/drone-pilot-book-213263> [accessed 19 October 2015].

- ★ McFate, Sean, "The Hidden Costs of America's Addiction to Mercenaries," *Defense One* [15 August 2016]. <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2016/08/americas-addiction-mercenaries/130731/> [accessed 16 August 2016].

The US does not have more than 4,000 soldiers in Iraq, it really has almost 10,000 soldiers and contractors supporting operations there. The role of contractors on the battlefield plays a profound shaping effect on US policy decisions or so this article argues.

McLeary, Paul, "The Pentagon's Third Offset May Be Dead, But No One Knows What Comes Next," *Foreign Policy* [18 December 2017]. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/12/18/the-pentagons-third-offset-may-be-dead-but-no-one-knows-what-comes-next/> [accessed 19 December 2017].

McMaster, H.R. and Gabriel Scheinmann, "U.S. Restraint Has Created an Unstable and Dangerous World," *Foreign Policy* [17 June 2022]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/06/17/us-military-strategy-geopolitics-restraint-russia-china-ukraine-war/> [accessed 19 June 2022].

Mehta, Aaron, "Why are US drones being based in Greece for the first time?" *Defense News* [23 May 2018]. <https://www.defensenews.com/air/2018/05/23/us-drones-are-being-based-in-greece-for-the-first-time-and-that-might-not-sit-well-with-turkey/> [accessed 24 May 2018].

Milley, Mark A. "Winning Matters, Especially in a Complex World," *Army Magazine* [5 October 2015]. <http://www.armymagazine.org/2015/10/05/winning-matters/> [accessed 6 October 2015].

This is a great article to express the failure of senior military leaders to understand the concept of winning and the ignorance of these same leaders to recognize that no one knows what this means.

- ★ Milley, Mark A. "Chief of Staff of the Army: Changing Nature of War Won't Change Our Purpose," AUSA Green Book [1 October 2016]. <https://www.ausa.org/articles/chief-staff-army-changing-nature-war-won%E2%80%99t-change-our-purpose> [accessed 30 September 2016].

US Army Chief of Staff provides his vision of the future of war. In this he states that the nature of war does not change though its character does.

Milligan, Susan, "After Paris Attacks, Democratic Candidates Blame Bush for ISIS," *US News and World Report* [14 November 2015]. <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2015/11/14/after-paris-attacks-democratic-candidates-blame-bush-for-isis> [accessed 4 November 2017].

Montgomery, Nancy, "More Iraq and Afghanistan troops survived critical injuries as wars went on," *Stars and Stripes* [28 March 2019]. <https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/more-iraq-and-afghanistan-troops-survived-critical-injuries-as-wars-went-on-1.574629> [accessed 30 March 2019].

Morgan, Wesley, "The not-so-secret history of JSOC", *Washington Post* [15 December 2015]. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2015/12/15/the-not-so-secret-history-of-jsoc/> [accessed 16 December 2015].

The article includes detailed information into the conduct of the fight led by JSOC to kill and capture those in opposition to the U.S. over the last fifteen years. This report focuses on the details of two incidents that fared poorly with respect to final results.

Morgan, Wesley, "Pentagon's concealment of total troops in war zones under fire," *Politico* [26 August 2017]. <http://www.politico.com/story/2017/08/26/mattis-trump-troop-numbers-war-zone-242055> [accessed 28 August 2017].

Short, but useful discussion on the issues associated with Force manning Level politization.

Morton, Matthew, "Culture and the US Army: Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future", *Parameters* [45 (1), Spring 2015].

This is a good discussion on the best ways to inform military education given recent and distant historiography.

Myers, Meghann, "Milley: Future wars will be long, they'll be fought on the ground, and spec ops won't save us," *Army Times* [27 July 2017]. <http://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2017/07/27/milley-future-wars-will-be-long-theyll-be-fought-on-the-ground-and-spec-ops-wont-save-us/> [accessed 28 July 2017].

Office of the DNI, "Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community," Washington, DC: Office of the Director of National Intelligence [7 February 2022]. <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/IG/IG00/20220308/114469/HHRG-117-IG00-Wstate-HainesA-20220308.pdf> [accessed 11 March 2022].

Osborn, Kris, "The Army's More Lethal M1A2 SEP v4 Abrams Tank Variant Will Start Testing in the 2020s," *Scout* [7 February 2017]. <http://www.scout.com/military/warrior/story/1728632-new-army-m1a2-sepv4-abrams-tank-for-2020s> [accessed 8 February 2017].

Pelleriti, John A., Michael Maloney, David C. Cox, Heather J. Sullivan, J. Eric Piskura, and Montigo J. Hawkins, "The Insufficiency of U.S. Irregular Warfare Doctrine," *National Defense University Press and Joint Force Quarterly* 93 [14 May 2019]. <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1848028/the-insufficiency-of-us-irregular-warfare-doctrine/> [accessed 20 May 2019].

Peters, Heidi M., Moshe Schwartz, and Lawrence Kapp, "Department of Defense Contractor and Troop Levels in Iraq and Afghanistan: 2007-2016," Congressional Research Service [15 August 2016]. <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44116.pdf> [accessed 18 August 2016].

The figures seem low for the post 2014 contractor role in Iraq, but this may be because the focus of the report is on DoD funded contracts and not DoS and much of the embassy contractor support is DoS.

- ★ Petranick, Michael, "On ISIS: The Reality of the 21st Century Battlefield," *Small Wars Journal* [18 April 2016]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/on-isis-the-reality-of-the-21st-century-battlefield> [accessed 18 April 2016].

The article rambles and loses coherence on multiple occasions. This is clearly intended as a journal length article to capture the changing nature of conflict. The only reason it has a star is because it has some really good footnotes and links.

Philipps, Dave, "Special Operations Troops Top Casualty List as U.S. Relies More on Elite Forces," *The New York Times* [4 February 2017]. <https://mobile.nytimes.com/2017/02/04/us/navy-seal-william-ryan-owens-dead-yemen.html> [accessed 6 February 2017].



This article provides important information and commentary on the problem of fighting the current fight with super heroes.

- Raza, Assad A. and Jerri A. Lynn, "The Future of Civil Affairs: Creating Regimental Order from Chaos," *Small Wars Journal* [12 October 2018]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/future-civil-affairs-creating-regimental-order-chaos> [accessed 15 October 2018].
- Rempfer, Kyle, "Report: AFRICOM looks to cut special ops missions, pull out hundreds of troops from Africa," *Army Times* [2 August 2018]. <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-military/2018/08/02/report-africom-looks-to-cut-special-ops-missions-pull-out-hundreds-of-troops-from-africa/> [accessed 23 August 2018].
- Rempfer, Kyle, "DoD officials: Irregular warfare will no longer suffer a 'boom-bust' cycle in eras of great power competition," *Military Times* [6 February 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-army/2019/02/06/dod-officials-irregular-warfare-will-no-longer-suffer-a-boom-bust-cycle-in-eras-of-great-power-competition/> [accessed 7 February 2019].
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- Seese, Gregory S. "Comprehensive PSYOP Assessment and Evaluation: Measuring Impact," presented to the Special Operations Command-Central Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment Group, 19 February 2016.
- Seligman, Lara, "U.S. Military Slashes Foreign-Language Training," *Foreign Policy* [13 May 2019]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/05/13/us-military-slashes-foreign-language-training-pentagon-cuts-trump-border-wall-mexico-pentagon/> [accessed 15 May 2019].
- Shane, Leo III, "Mattis: Expect U.S. troops in Iraq even after ISIS falls," *Military Times* [22 March 2017]. <http://www.militarytimes.com/articles/mattis-troops-iraq-years-after-isis> [accessed 24 March 2017].
- ★ Sims, Christopher, "Academics in Foxholes: The Life and Death of the Human Terrain System", *Foreign Affairs* [4 February 2016]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/afghanistan/2016-02-04/academics-foxholes> [accessed 8 February 2016].
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- Historical analysis of US involvement in the Middle East. The author makes roughly the same arguments as does Andrew Bacevich in his book *America's War for the Greater Middle East: A Military History*. The book is better.
- Smeltz, Dina and John Cookson, "Americans aren't as eager to retreat from the Middle East as politicians seem to think," *The Hill* [20 February 2020]. <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/483731-americans-arent-as-eager-to-retreat-from-the-middle-east-as-politicians> [accessed 21 February 2020].
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- South, Todd, "Yemen coast a 'live fire laboratory' for firing lasers," *Marine Corps Times* [8 March 2018]. <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/03/08/yemen-coast-a-live-fire->

[laboratory-for-firing-lasers/](#) [accessed 9 March 2018].

South, Todd, "Return of fires: How the Army is getting back to its big guns as it prepares for the near-peer fight," *Army Times* [27 August 2018]. <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/08/27/return-of-fires-how-the-army-is-getting-back-to-its-big-guns-as-it-prepares-for-the-near-peer-fight/> [accessed 28 August 2018].

South, Todd, "Army's long-awaited Iraq war study finds Iran was the only winner in a conflict that holds many lessons for future wars," *Army Times* [18 January 2019]. <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2019/01/18/armys-long-awaited-iraq-war-study-finds-iran-was-the-only-winner-in-a-conflict-that-holds-many-lessons-for-future-wars/> [accessed 23 January 2019].

Spencer, John, "Why Militaries Must Destroy Cities to Save Them," *Modern War Institute at West Point* [8 November 2018]. <https://mwi.usma.edu/militaries-must-destroy-cities-save/> [accessed 9 November 2018].

Spencer, John, "The Eight Rules of Urban Warfare and Why We Must Work to Change Them," *Modern War Institute at West Point* [12 January 2021]. <https://mwi.usma.edu/the-eight-rules-of-urban-warfare-and-why-we-must-work-to-change-them/> [accessed 22 January 2021].

Spencer, Larry O. "US Air Force Key to Third Offset Strategy," *Defense News* [7 November 2016]. <http://www.defensenews.com/articles/us-air-force-key-to-third-offset-strategy> [accessed 14 November 2016].

Brief overview of the first and second offset and a warning against the third offset emphasizing solely technological solutions rather than operational ones.

Stieb, Joseph, "Whose Version of the War on Terror Won?" *War on the Rocks* [20 July 2022]. <https://warontherocks.com/2022/07/whose-version-of-the-war-on-terror-won/> [accessed 15 October 2022].

This is the kind of article that I love.

It makes me think and I want to argue with it. You can't ask for more than that.

I think that Joseph Stieb lays out a fair assessment of the competing views of the U.S. participation in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) and why understanding the various perspectives matter. For me, this article provides support to my point of the competing and conflicting narratives currently operating in America today. You see those in favor of and those opposed to global engagement and transformation on both sides of the political spectrum. In the context of this article, one might argue that there are four competing narratives in America when I have previously laid out only three (<https://www.narrativespace.net/blog/narrative-war-on-american-streets-in-2020>). The specific number of narratives isn't what matters. It matters that people are aware of and conversational with the variety of narratives such that they can recognize, comprehend, and oppose or agree with them as needed or desired.

Each of the narratives discussed as related to GWOT are important for the U.S.: believers in American supremacy, supporters of international order and institutions, isolationist nationalists, and critics of America's flaws. While we each may disagree on what the right percentage of each of these four groups might or should be for a healthy country, I hope that we recognize the value each group plays in a healthy American foreign policy. It is good to have the white knights seeking to slay dragons, the bleeding hearts that want to save the world, those who prefer to defend and protect the nation for its own sake while leaving other societies and cultures to themselves, and those who question and condemn the nation's flaws.

Each group plays an important and necessary part in generating healthy tension. While I may tire of lengthy rhetoric from any of these groups on a given day, when I reflect on the various roles they play I know that each has been useful in building the country that exists and that has provided the benefits that all American citizens enjoy today.

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I don't care what you think about the author; read this.

Paul Wolfowitz is a polarizing figure. Many people express extremes opinions regarding his statements and discount him as some sort of evil character. I think this is a mistake. I am not a fan of all the decisions he advocated, nor do I like the way that he regularly presents the catastrophes that have come from those recommendations. That said, he is intelligent, and he was in the room when a great many important decisions regarding the GWOT were made, and his recollections are worth serious consideration.

The biggest lesson that comes from this lengthy recollection is that the United States government, regardless of party, does not know how to do strategy. This is not the first time that I have come to realize this sad fact. Reading almost any memoir from GWOT leads to the same realization. The military recommends and the political appointees demand actions without a reasonable appreciation of cause and effect.

Strategy is, in part, about the management of cause and effect. A leader wants a desired effect and those who provide advice should be offering the logic path through which that effect can be accomplished. I know that strategy is much more complicated than cause and effect and is often more of an emergent phenomenon rather than an effect from a specific action. The point is, we don't really grasp the proper manner in which the desired effect happens and that leaves us with recommending actions.

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I disagree with Erik Prince, but he isn't wrong.

I know that a lot of people like to poke fun at and mock Erik Prince's ideas about the privatization of the American military with respect to the conduct of a variety of missions. I ask those people to hear me out on a couple of points.

One, I disagree with Erik Prince that economic efficiency and effectiveness should determine the way the U.S. goes about the conduct of national security actions. It may be cost-effective to pay private contractors to do advise and assist missions that require decades of commitment. I have worked with some of Erik Prince's folks in Iraq on more than one occasion and in other places in the Middle East as well. They are not the caricatures that Prince's critics paint them to be. They do their jobs well and accomplish their missions. My objection to Erik Prince's ideas is that the U.S. government and U.S. citizens and soldiers should shoulder the burdens of securing the republic because that is the right thing to do. Citizens need to sacrifice and suffer for their country or there won't be a country worth that sacrifice or suffering left.

Two, Erik Prince is correct when he says that there has been no accountability of the failures of the "national security "elites," both uniformed and civilian." This is what should really bother people about this article. The troubling aspects are where Prince is correct: wasteful spending, bad policy, ignorant efforts, misunderstanding the operational environment, and a lack of accountability for any, some, or all of it. I want Erik Prince to be wrong all the way around, but I am starting to lose any semblance of faith that those in authority will face the world as it is and the problems as they are and design systems, educational and training programs, and leader development to mitigate and overcome the problems and failures that Prince is seeking to remedy with his recommendations.

A privatized national security system is bad for a republic. Citizens need to serve, need to study, and need to demand accountability of those who serve and study so that the republic is defended, interests are protected, and influence increased.

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The report includes some good summary information of drone strikes over the course of the war.

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Schmidle, Robert, William Casebeer, Diane DiEuliis, James Giordana, John Shook, Jason Spitaletta, and Nicholas D. Wright, "White Paper on Social and Cognitive Neuroscience Underpinnings of ISIL Behavior and Implications for Strategic Communication, Messaging, and Influence", Strategic Multi-Layer (SMA) Periodic Publication [May 2015].

This white paper provides a succession of chapters designed to lead the reader through a logical series of discussions intended to: (1) describe and define neuro-cognitive mechanisms involved in the type(s) of aggressive narratives and violent behaviors exhibited by ISIL/ISIS; (2) afford an overview of brain structures and function involved in these cognitive and socially-interactive behavioral processes of thought, emotion, decision-making and actions; (3) provide insight to the possible effect(s) of narratives and discourses upon these neuro-cognitive processes; (4) describe ways that religious constructs afford meta-narratives that can be engaged to influence individual and group cognitions and behavioral activity; (5) illustrate how these narratives can be utilized in psychological operations and actions to support terrorist agenda and outcomes; and (6) explain how an understanding of these processes and factors can be important to developing operational techniques, tactics and strategies that are viable and valuable for deterring ISIL/ISIS' rhetoric, recruitment and actions upon the world stage.



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Shane, Scott, "Drone Strike Statistics Answer Few Questions, and Raise Many," *The New York Times* [3 July 2016]. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/04/world/middleeast/drone-strike-statistics-answer-few-questions-and-raise-many.html> [accessed 7 July 2016].

Shook, John R. and James Giordano, "Macro-Social Trends and National Defense Scenarios: Forecasting Crises and Forging Responses using Generation Theory in a Bio-psychosocial Framework," Strategic Multilayer Assessment Periodic Publication White Paper [18 September 2017]. <http://nsiteam.com/macro-social-trends-and-national-defense-scenarios/> [accessed 6 October 2017].

SMA Support to SOCCENT, "Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional Narratives about the Future: Assessing the Impact of The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)", Tampa, Florida [July 2015]. Includes an analysis of narratives and what may happen in the post-ISIS Middle East and North Africa. Good data.

SMA, "Counter ISIL Messaging: Short Reports from Technical Teams," Washington DC [April 2016].

The week of 25 April 2016, the Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) program in the Joint Staff—in coordination with USASOC and DHS—held a high-level political-military simulation based on four scenarios.

The exercise was follow-on to a proof of concept carried out back in December 2015 and has been carefully planned in collaboration with a large community including USASOC, DHS/S&T, DHS/Office of Intelligence and Analysis, TRADOC, academia, and industry. The comments in this document include those most useful for the dissertation study conducted.

SMA, "Gray Zone Conflicts, Challenges, and Opportunities: Executive Summaries of Team Reports," Washington DC [July 2017].

SMA, "Integration Report: Gray Zone Conflicts, Challenges, and Opportunities," Washington DC [July 2017].

Note: The Strategic Multilayer Assessment Team is a combination of government and academic experts on the region and the issues. They are responding to questions presented by the CENTCOM commander and senior leaders. This set of responses are each several hundred pages per report.

Astorino-Courtois, Allison. The Meaning of ISIS Defeat & Shaping Stability: Highlights from CENTCOM Round 1, 2 and 3 Reach-back Reports. Washington DC, March 2017.

SMA CENTCOM Reach-back Reports, 1 of 9: Messaging. This is Part 1 of a 9 part series of SMA Reach back responses to questions posed by USCENTCOM. Each report contains responses to multiple questions grouped by theme. Washington DC, 13 January 2017.

SMA CENTCOM Reach-back Reports, 2 of 9: The Fight Against ISIS. This is Part 2 of a 9 part series of SMA Reach back responses to questions posed by USCENTCOM. Each report contains responses to multiple questions grouped by theme. Washington DC, 20 January 2017.

SMA CENTCOM Reach-back Reports, 3 of 9: Encouraging Regional Stability. This is Part 3 of a 9 part series of SMA Reach back responses to questions posed by USCENTCOM. Each report contains responses to multiple questions grouped by theme. Washington DC, 27 January 2017.

SMA CENTCOM Reach-back Reports, 4 of 9: Regional Actor Interests and Motivations. This is Part 4 of a 9 part series of SMA Reach back responses to questions posed by USCENTCOM. Each report contains responses to multiple questions grouped by theme. Washington DC, 7 February 2017.

SMA CENTCOM Reach-back Reports, 6 of 9: ISIL Support and Recruitment. This is Part 6 of a 9 part series

of SMA Reach back responses to questions posed by USCENTCOM. Each report contains responses to multiple questions grouped by theme. Washington DC, 10 January 2017.

SMA CENTCOM Reach-back Reports, 7 of 9: USG Bureaucratic Requirements. This is Part 7 of a 9 part series of SMA Reach back responses to questions posed by USCENTCOM. Each report contains responses to multiple questions grouped by theme. Washington DC, 18 January 2017.

SMA CENTCOM Reach-back Reports, 8 of 9: Post ISIL Governance. This is Part 8 of a 9 part series of SMA Reach back responses to questions posed by USCENTCOM. Each report contains responses to multiple questions grouped by theme. Washington DC, 10 January 2017.

SMA CENTCOM Reach-back Reports, 9 of 9: Coalition Views. This is Part 9 of a 9 part series of SMA Reach back responses to questions posed by USCENTCOM. Each report contains responses to multiple questions grouped by theme. Washington DC, 7 February 2017.

SMA Conference, 10th Annual Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment (SMA) Conference Jointly held with DHS, NCTC, DNI/NIC “From Control to Influence? A View of—and Vision for—the Future, Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment (SMA) Contract Preparation with NSI, Inc. [25-26 April 2017].

SMA Reach-back, Response to Questions Regarding Kurdish Referendum on Independence. Washington DC, 21 June 2017.

Executive Summary: President Ma’soud Barzani has been promising a referendum on Kurdish independence since 2014, so we have to ask the question why now? The non-binding referendum, if approved, will not necessarily mean a declaration of independence (Atran, Rasheed, Wahab). Barzani has admitted that the purpose of the referendum was not to declare independence but to gauge the opinions and rights of the Kurds in Iraq (Anonymous 2). But there are several factors potentially driving Barzani’s decision to announce a referendum now.

SMA Reach-back, Response to CENTCOM Question (V1): What are USCENTCOM and the global counter-ISIL coalition missing from countermessaging efforts in the information domain? Washington DC, 7 November 2016.

Executive Summary: One way for evaluating CENTCOM and the global counter-ISIL Coalition messaging is to break the idea into its three component parts: the content, the medium (the way the message is transmitted), and the messenger (see Beutel).

SMA Reach-back, Response to CENTCOM Question (V2): What are the key factors that would impact the wave of violent extremism and ideological radicalism that affect the Sunni community? Washington DC, 7 November 2016.

Executive Summary: The Sunni community is not homogenous, and contributors expressed their discomfort making broad generalizations for a number of reasons. Most Sunni Arabs still consider themselves first a citizen of their respective countries with the exception of populations in the midst of conflict like Iraq, Syria, and Yemen (Jebnoun).

- Failure of the Social Contract

- Failure to Defeat ISIL

- Lack of Resolution in Syria

- Lack of Unified Sunni Political Voice

- Perception of Expanded Shia Influence in Sunni Areas

- Personal Motivations

SMA Reach-back, Response to CENTCOM Question (V3): What long-term actions and processes should U.S. government (USG) institutions, the Coalition and the international community examine to

position ourselves against a long term ISIL threat? How can the private sector be effectively engaged by government institutions to optimize the effects needed for success? Washington DC, 7 November 2016.

Executive Summary: Expert contributors agree that terrorism will remain a long-standing global threat. In addition, there is emphasis on the leadership of the USG as a whole of nation concept. The military alone cannot position parties against lasting terrorism threat but it certainly can shape and influence them through stability operations and other people centric maneuvering. It must work in close cooperation with other USG colleagues and coalition partners to do this while mitigating not only ISIL global impact, but other people and groups that strive to commit the devastating acts of violence. Further the USG should take deliberate measures to lessen underlying factors that lead parties to terror responses. Some specific ideas from this group of contributors include:

- As war perpetuates and airstrikes continue the USG and its partner's further loose legitimacy.
- Learn to maneuver in the narrative space
- Data is your friend
- Engaging Academia
- Everything is local

SMA Reach-back, Response to CENTCOM Question (V4): What are the most likely post-ISIL Iraq scenarios with regards to Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, Infrastructure, Physical Environment, and Time (PMESII-PT)? Where are the main PMESII-PT friction points, which are most acute, and how are they best exploited to accomplish a stable end state favorable to U.S. and coalition interests? Washington DC, 7 November 2016.

SMA Reach-back, Response to CENTCOM Question (V5): What are the factors that will influence the future of Syria and how can we best affect them? Washington DC, 24 October 2016.

Executive Summary: Experts varied from pessimistic (chronic warfare) to cautiously optimistic regarding their expectations for the future of Syria, yet mentioned many of the same factors that they felt would influence Syria's future path. Most of these key factors – ranging from external geopolitical rivalries to the health and welfare of individual Syrians – were outside what typical military operations might affect. Instead they center on political and humanitarian recovery, healing of social divisions and the solid backing of international actors that agree on what that recovery will entail. The six factors are described below.

External Factor: the use of Iranian, Saudi proxies in Syria

External Factor: the degree of Coalition-non Coalition agreement on the governance and security conditions of post-war Syria

External Factor: US and Coalition public support for sustained political, security and humanitarian aid for Syria

Internal Factor: the role of Assad family

Internal Factor: What is done to repair social divisions and sectarianism in Syria

Internal Factor: Demographics and a traumatized population

SMA Reach-back, Response to CENTCOM Question (V6): What are the strategic and operational implications of the Iran nuclear deal on the US-led coalition's ability to prosecute the war against ISIL in Iraq and Syria and to create the conditions for political, humanitarian and security sector stability? Washington DC, 7 November 2016.

Executive Summary: Prior to the signing of the Iran Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in July 2014, Iran watchers tended to anticipate one of two outcomes. One camp expected a reduction in US-Iran tensions and that the JCPOA might present an opening for improved regional cooperation between the US-led coalition and Iran. The other camp predicted that Iran would become more assertive in wielding its influence in the region once the agreement was reached.

Implications of JCPOA for the Near-term Battle: Marginal

Implications of JCPOA for Post-ISIL Shaping: Considerable Potential  
Provoking Friction as a Bargaining Chip  
Increased Proxy Funding.

SMA Reach-back, Response to CENTCOM Question (V7): What are the strategic objectives and motivations of indigenous state and non-state partners in the counter-ISIL fight? Washington DC, 7 November 2016.

Executive Summary: The following are high-level results of a study assessing Middle East regional dynamics based on the alignments and conflicts among three critical drivers: actor interests, resources and resolve. Expected outcomes are based on the strategic interests of regional actors.

ISIL will be defeated in Syria and Iraq

Conflict will continue in Syria following ISIL defeat; will escalate significantly with threat of Assad defeat

Gol lacks resolve to make concessions to garner support from Sunni Tribes

Saudi Arabia-Iran Proxy funding continues; easily reignites conflict

SMA Reach-back, Special Topic: Mosul Coalition Fragmentation: Causes and Effects, Washington DC, 7 November 2016.

Executive Summary: This paper assesses the potential causes and effects of fragmentation on the Counter-ISIL coalition. This coalition consists of three distinct but interrelated subsets: 1) the CJTF-OIR coalition; 2) the regional coalition, de facto allies of convenience, who may provide any combination of money, forces or proxies; and, 3) the tactical coalition, the plethora of disparate groups fighting on the ground. The study team assessed how a change in either the CJTF-OIR coalition or regional coalition could influence the tactical coalition post Mosul and the subsequent effect of these potential fragmentations on the Gol's ability to control Iraq.

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### Hubris and Mendacity

These are John Sopko’s two words for why things went so poorly in Afghanistan. I always recommend reading his own words as captured in his quarterly report to Congress. For those of you without the time for 214 pages, then I recommend a brief summation of his remarks to defense writers captured by Jeff Schogol (<https://taskandpurpose.com/news/afghanistan-reconstruction-failures-special-inspector-general/>) where the above two word summation is included.

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1. Strategy: The U.S. government continuously struggled to develop and implement a coherent strategy for what it hoped to achieve.
2. Timelines: The U.S. government consistently underestimated the amount of time required to rebuild Afghanistan, and created unrealistic timelines and expectations that prioritized spending quickly. These choices increased corruption and reduced the effectiveness of programs.
3. Sustainability: Many of the institutions and infrastructure projects the United States built were not sustainable.
4. Personnel: Counterproductive civilian and military personnel policies and practices thwarted the effort.
5. Insecurity: Persistent insecurity severely undermined reconstruction efforts.

6. Context: The U.S. government did not understand the Afghan context and therefore failed to tailor its efforts accordingly.
7. Monitoring and Evaluation: U.S. government agencies rarely conducted sufficient monitoring and evaluation to understand the impact of their efforts.

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This is good reading and should be mandatory for every military and national security professional across the globe. It provides a sad, but well-written account of how the richest and most powerful military force in the world can be defeated by \_\_\_\_\_ (you fill in the blank, because I don't think the Taliban are the only ones who have or will exploit these weaknesses). In short, the answer is by our own incompetence, poor leadership, and mismanagement.

John Sopko has been a real American hero throughout the last years of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan. As the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, his reports have provided the best information on U.S. mismanagement and misunderstanding of the operational environment and the conduct of building a partner force in Afghanistan.

His organization's reports are clear, interesting, and, at times, entertaining. The latest report provides similar clear-worded critique and assessment for why things happened as they did in 2021. The report, titled "Collapse of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: An Assessment of the Factors That Led to Its Demise," identifies six factors that accelerated the Afghan military's collapse and nine factors for why the Afghan military was poorly prepared for the departure of U.S. military forces and contractors.

Read, enjoy, and I hope, learn.

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, Evaluation Report, "U.S.-Provided Funds and Equipment to Afghanistan: An Assessment of Taliban Access to Assets Remaining in Country When the Afghan Government Collapsed," SIGAR 23-04-IP Evaluation Report [November 2022]. <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/evaluations/SIGAR-23-04-IP.pdf> [accessed 16 December 2022].

- ★ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, Evaluation Report, "Why the Afghan Government Collapsed," SIGAR 23-05-IP Evaluation Report [November 2022]. <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/evaluations/SIGAR-23-05-IP.pdf> [accessed 16 December 2022].
- ★ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, "Why the Afghan Security Forces Collapsed," SIGAR 23-16-IP Evaluation Report [February 2023]. <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/evaluations/SIGAR-23-16-IP.pdf> [accessed 25 April 2023].

U.S. Department of Defense. *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*. Report to Congress In Accordance With Section 1225 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (P.L. 113-291), as amended. Washington DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, June 2018. <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Jul/03/2001938620/-1/-1/1/1225-REPORT-JUNE-2018-FINAL-UNCLASS-BASE.PDF> [accessed 9 July 2018].

- ★ Abdul-Ahad, Ghaith, "'Whatever horrors they do, they do in secret': inside the Taliban's return to power," *The Guardian* [17 February 2022]. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2022/feb/17/inside-taliban-return-to-power-afghanistan-mazar-i-sherif> [accessed 21 February 2022].

A powerful read about the manner in which the Taliban gained and are maintaining power. This reminds me a lot of the way that ISIS came to power through engagements that attacked the corruption in the national

government and over months and years turned people toward their organization. This is an excellent example of narrative war in progress.

Abuelgasim, Fay and Kathy Gannon, “Longest US-Taliban peace talks see ‘progress,’ but agreement on withdrawal timeline still a sticking point,” *Military Times* [13 March 2019].

<https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2019/03/13/longest-us-taliban-peace-talks-see-progress-but-agreement-on-withdrawal-timeline-remains-elusive/> [accessed 13 March 2019].

Ackerman, Elliot, “‘We never understood what winning meant’ — A decorated Marine Raider reflects on the fall of Kabul,” *Task & Purpose* [9 August 2022]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/news/marine-raider-elliott-ackerman-interview-the-fifth-act-book/> [accessed 18 October 2022].

AFCENT, “Combined Forces Air Component Commander 2014-2021 Airpower Statistics,” AFCENT Public Affairs [30 November 2021].

[https://www.afcent.af.mil/Portals/82/November%202021%20Airpower%20Summary\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.afcent.af.mil/Portals/82/November%202021%20Airpower%20Summary_FINAL.pdf) [accessed 9 January 2022].

Two slides that include number of sorties and strikes of both Operations Enduring Sentinel and Inherent Resolve.

Ahmady, Ajmal, “Why Afghanistan Fell: An Insider’s Account of What Went Wrong,” *Foreign Affairs* [11 October 2021]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/afghanistan/2021-10-11/why-afghanistan-fell> [accessed 13 October 2021].

I disagree with the pro-Ghani tone of the article, but I think that the author captures some important truths in what he expresses. Point one, Ashraf Ghani was not the far-seeing visionary that he is portrayed as. Point two, the Doha agreement was flawed in its appreciation of Afghanistan and the causes and effects of the fighting there. Point three, U.S. representative to the Doha talks, Zalmay Khalilzad, needs to be held accountable for his flawed advice and actions in the name of the United States of America and every senior leader who allowed him to act on behalf of the U.S. while being an independent citizen also needs to be held accountable.

★ Aikins, Matthieu, Christoph Koettl, Evan Hill, and Eric Schmitt, “Times Investigation: In U.S. Drone Strike, Evidence Suggests No ISIS Bomb,” *The New York Times* [10 September 2021].

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/10/world/asia/us-air-strike-drone-kabul-afghanistan-isis.html> [accessed 14 September 2021].

“It was the last known missile fired by the United States in its 20-year war in Afghanistan, and the military called it a “righteous strike” — a drone attack after hours of surveillance on Aug. 29 against a vehicle that American officials thought contained an ISIS bomb and posed an imminent threat to troops at Kabul’s airport.”

Almukhtar, Sarah and Karen Yourish, “14 Years After U.S. Invasion, the Taliban Are Back in Control of Large Parts of Afghanistan,” *The New York Times* [16 October 2015].

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/09/29/world/asia/afghanistan-taliban-maps.html> [accessed 16 October 2015].

Altman, Howard, “The Afghan Army’s Last Commander On How His Country Really Fell,” *The Warzone* [9 June 2022]. <https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/the-last-general-afghanistans-top-commander-on-how-his-country-really-fell> [accessed 19 August 2023].

This is an article I just read even though it is more than a year old. If you haven’t already read it, it is worth your time as we reflect on the events of two years ago that occurred in Afghanistan.

The worst and best part of the information is this quote: “Alizai doesn’t believe that U.S. intelligence agencies were all that surprised by the rapid Afghan military meltdown.

“I think they pretend to be surprised,” he said. “But for us, it was a surprise why they are surprised.”

There is a sad and solemn truth to this expression. If we were surprised by what happened during the collapse of Afghanistan, then we were dangerously ignorant. If we weren’t surprised, then we were cynically political.



Anderson, Charlie, "How a few good 'Bastards' from the Army National Guard helped secure the Kabul airport," *Task & Purpose* [15 September 2021]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/opinion/afghanistan-task-force-bastard/> [accessed 16 September 2021].

Associated Press, "A timeline of U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan since 2001," *Associated Press* [6 July 2016]. <http://www.airforcetimes.com/story/military/2016/07/06/timeline-us-troop-levels-afghanistan-since-2001/86755782/> [accessed 7 July 2016].

Associated Press, "Afghanistan's Taliban announce annual spring offensive," *Military Times* [24 April 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2018/04/25/afghanistans-taliban-announce-annual-spring-offensive/> [accessed 26 April 2018].

Associated Press, "Taliban again reject Afghan offer of peace talks with Kabul," *Military Times* [8 July 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2018/07/08/taliban-again-reject-afghan-offer-of-peace-talks-with-kabul/> [accessed 9 July 2018].

Atlantic Council, "Experts react: What the fall of Afghanistan means for Europe," *Atlantic Council* [18 August 2021]. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/experts-react-what-the-fall-of-afghanistan-means-for-europe/> [accessed 19 August 2021].

Ault, Robert T. "Adapting Army Aviation for Irregular Warfare: Developing Leadership and Trust in a COIN Fight," *Small Wars Journal* [25 November 2014]. <https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/adapting-army-aviation-for-irregular-warfare-developing-leadership-and-trust-in-a-coin-fight> [accessed 15 February 2019].

The article includes a variety of stories on COL Ault's unit's conduct in Afghanistan. One of the stories is about the participants in a village where the leaders were former opponents of the US.

Bacevich, Andrew, "Yes, the U.S. can leave Afghanistan," *Los Angeles Times* [18 October 2015]. <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-1020-bacevich-war-no-choice-20151018-story.html> [accessed 20 October 2015].

Baldor, Lolita C. and Meghan Myers, "Watchdog finds no misconduct in mistaken Afghan airstrike," *Military Times* [3 November 2021]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/breaking-news/2021/11/03/watchdog-finds-no-misconduct-in-mistaken-afghan-airstrike/> [accessed 5 November 2021].

Report on the official review of the 29 August 2021 strike that killed numerous civilians in Kabul.

Balsamo, Michael, Mary Clare Jalonick, and Normaan Merchant, "Concerns over US terror threats rising, more troops deployed as Taliban takes over," *Military Times* [15 August 2021]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/08/15/concerns-over-us-terror-threats-rising-more-troops-deployed-as-taliban-takes-over/> [accessed 17 August 2021].

Bapat, Navin and Rebecca Best, "Here's why the Taliban might still want to negotiate with the U.S." *The Washington Post* [11 September 2019]. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/09/12/heres-why-taliban-might-still-want-to-negotiate-with-us/> [accessed 15 September 2019].

Barndollar, Gil and Jason Dempsey, "Don't Believe the Generals: Afghanistan was a lost war long before last year's final withdrawal." *The Atlantic* [2 September 2022]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/09/afghanistan-withdrawal-us-military-generals/671300/> [accessed 6 September 2022].

I like this short article because I agree with it.

The fundamental point is that the military leadership did not understand the operational environment in Afghanistan and because of that they regularly made recommendations that did not succeed. Now, many of those same leaders would have you believe that they were right all along and that only a little more time or a

lot more resources would have changed things if not for those people in Washington DC. I am not a fan of those people either and I think a case can be made that the generals are not the only or even the primary people to blame in the catastrophe that was and unfortunately still is Afghanistan, but they should and must bear blame.

I hope to have a blog post out soon addressing a longer version of what I think should be done or the approach that needs to be taken. Until then, read this article and be very skeptical of people who are a talking head on a news program with the title of retired general.

BBC, "Afghanistan's ghost soldiers undermined fight against Taliban - ex-official," *BBC* [10 November 2021]. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-59230564> [accessed 15 November 2021].

Bellinger, John, "The Chilcot Inquiry and the Legal Basis for the Iraq War," *Lawfare* [11 July 2016]. <https://www.lawfareblog.com/chilcot-inquiry-and-legal-basis-iraq-war> [accessed 12 July 2016].

Bender, Bryan, "Blame game begins as Afghanistan situation worsens," *Policy* [13 May 2021]. <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/05/13/blame-game-us-withdrawal-afghanistan-487845> [accessed 21 May 2021].

Bergen, Peter, "The leader of the anti-Taliban resistance speaks out," *CNN* [1 September 2021]. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/01/opinions/leader-anti-taliban-resistance-speaks-bergen/> [accessed 4 September 2021].

Bezhan, Erud, "Left Out: Afghanistan Watches Its Own Peace Process From The Sidelines," *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty* [3 April 2019]. <https://www.rferl.org/a/left-out-afghanistan-watches-its-own-peace-process-from-the-sidelines/29859400.html> [accessed 4 April 2019].

Billing, Lynzy, "The Night Raids," *Pro Publica* [15 December 2022]. <https://www.propublica.org/article/afghanistan-night-raids-zero-units-lynzy-billing> [accessed 18 January 2023].

This article tells the story of night raid squads of American and Afghan forces that operated in Afghanistan and often caused casualties that could be termed collateral damage. This is an emotional story told by one who came from the land where the raids took place.

Blue, Victor J., Thomas Gibbons-Neff, and Safiullah Padshah, "On Patrol: 12 Days With a Taliban Police Unit in Kabul," *The New York Times* [28 January 2022]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/28/world/asia/afghanistan-taliban-kabul-shiites.html> [accessed 4 February 2022].

Bokhari, Farhan, "US-Taliban ties a way in Afghanistan to keep out IS and boost trade," *Nikkei Asian Review* [1 August 2018]. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-Relations/US-Taliban-ties-a-way-in-Afghanistan-to-keep-out-IS-and-boost-trade> [accessed 2 August 2018].

- ★ Bolduc, Donald C. "Going Back to the Future: It is Time for Change in Afghanistan," *Small Wars Journal* [circa 10 May 2018]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/going-back-future-it-time-change-afghanistan> [accessed 13 May 2018].

This is an excellent review by a legitimate expert.

The author also only addresses the actions rather than the understanding necessary. I would submit that understanding precedes success. If soldiers don't understand the locals, how can they actually influence them?

Regardless of my slight issues, this is well worth the time reading it.

Bolduc, Donald C. "The Real Reasons We're Losing the Afghanistan War," *The Daily Beast* [22 June 2018]. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-real-reasons-were-losing-the-afghanistan-war> [accessed 25 June 2018].

Bolduc, Donald C. "Opinion: America's three big mistakes in Afghanistan," *Military Times* [22 June 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/2019/06/22/opinion-americas-three-big-mistakes-in->

[afghanistan/](#) [accessed 24 June 2019].

Boone, Jon, "How exile changed the Taliban: Decades abroad made the militant group's leaders more worldly, but they may struggle to control their foot soldiers," *Financial Times* [24 August 2021]. <https://www.ft.com/content/2aad0b12-7449-4a79-9706-961098312bcf> [accessed 6 November 2021].

I disagree with the author's thesis that the time in exile has moderated the Taliban.

- ★ Bowden, Mark, "Echoes from a Distant Battlefield," *Vanity Fair* [11 November 2011]. <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2011/12/battle-of-wanat-201112> [accessed 16 July 2018].

A look at the Battle of Wanat from the perspective of the lieutenant, the father, and the battalion commander. Well written and engaging.

Bulos, Nabih, "Afghanistan's air force is a rare U.S.-backed success story. It may soon fail," *Los Angeles Times* [20 June 2021]. [https://www.bakersfield.com/ap/national/afghanistans-air-force-is-a-rare-u-s--backed-success-story-it-may-soon/article\\_c3baac99-9b18-5d3c-839e-224a1bd76ec6.html](https://www.bakersfield.com/ap/national/afghanistans-air-force-is-a-rare-u-s--backed-success-story-it-may-soon/article_c3baac99-9b18-5d3c-839e-224a1bd76ec6.html) [accessed 22 June 2021].

Burns, Robert, "War and waste: Cautionary tales as US ponders Afghan boost," *Military Times* [25 June 2017]. <http://www.militarytimes.com/articles/war-and-waste-cautionary-tales-as-us-ponders-afghan-boost> [accessed 26 June 2017].

This article provides some important information on the failure of the US effort to build the Afghan National Army and other elements of the counter-terrorism effort.

Burns, Robert, "Billions spent on Afghan army ultimately benefitted Taliban," *Military Times* [16 August 2021]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/afghanistan/2021/08/16/billions-spent-on-afghan-army-ultimately-benefitted-taliban/> [accessed 17 August 2021].

Calamur, Krishnadev, "Afghanistan Takes a Bloody Path to Pursue Peace," *The Atlantic* [2 May 2018]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/05/afghanistan-violence/559370/> [accessed 4 May 2018].

Calamur, Krishnadev, "'A Sudden Burst of Movement' on the Afghan Peace Process," *Defense One* [26 July 2018]. <https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2018/07/sudden-burst-movement-afghan-peace-process/150065/> [accessed 30 July 2018].

Calamur, Krishnadev, "No End in Sight," *The Atlantic* [11 September 2018]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/09/9-11-us-troops-afghanistan/569803/> [accessed 11 September 2018].

- ★ Cancian, Mark F. "Tell Me How This Ends: Military Advice, Strategic Goals, and the "Forever War" in Afghanistan," Center for Strategic & International Studies [July 2019]. [https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/190708\\_Cancian\\_Afghanistan\\_WEB.pdf](https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/190708_Cancian_Afghanistan_WEB.pdf) [accessed 18 July 2019].

Really interesting facts and a humorous approach to the serious problem of civil-military strategic planning. The author uses information on Afghanistan to address the larger problem that the US does not know how to plan for, execute, and complete a war successfully. It is long, but it is worth skimming, if not more.

Canna, Sarah, editor. *Negotiated Settlement in Afghanistan: Elements of a Grand Bargain*. Strategic Multi-layer Assessment Periodic Publication by NSI Team [January 2019]. <https://nsiteam.com/negotiated-settlement-in-afghanistan-elements-of-a-grand-bargain/> [accessed 11 February 2019].

Chayes, Sarah, "The Ides of August," Sarah Chayes Blog [16 August 2021]. <https://www.sarahchayes.org/post/the-ides-of-august> [accessed 19 August 2021].

Clark, James, "This Marine-Made War Documentary Is So Raw The Corps Doesn't Want You To See It,"

*Task & Purpose* [5 April 2018]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/marine-afghanistan-documentary-combat-obscura/> [accessed 6 April 2018].

Clark, James, "The Outpost' is a fitting tribute to the soldiers who fought one of the bloodiest battles of the Afghan War," *Task & Purpose* [30 June 2020]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/entertainment/the-outpost-afghanistan-war-movie-review> [accessed 1 July 2020].

Coll, Steve and Adam Entous, "The Fall of the Islamic Republic: The secret history of America's final defeat in Afghanistan," *The New Yorker* [20 December 2021].

Constable, Pamela, "Death of Famed Afghan Commander in Taliban Massacre Highlights the Country's Struggles and Fears," *Afghanistan Peace Campaign* originally published in the *Washington Post* [20 June 2021]. <https://afghanistanpeacecampaign.org/2021/06/23/death-of-famed-afghan-commander-in-taliban-massacre-highlights-the-countrys-struggles-and-fears/> [accessed 14 July 2021].

Copp, Tara, "Pentagon: 11,000 US forces are now serving in Afghanistan," *Military Times* [30 August 2017]. <http://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2017/08/30/pentagon-11000-us-forces-are-serving-in-afghanistan/> [accessed 31 August 2017].

Copp, Tara, "ISIS, Taliban claim attack on Kabul airport hours after Mattis makes surprise visit," *Military Times* [27 September 2017]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2017/09/27/isis-taliban-claim-attack-on-kabul-airport-hours-after-mattis-makes-surprise-visit/> [accessed 28 September 2017].

Copp, Tara, "Why should the US stay in Afghanistan? Here's what the top commander there said," *Military Times* [30 May 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2018/05/30/why-should-the-us-stay-in-afghanistan-the-commander-of-coalition-forces-offers-his-views-as-he-departs/> [accessed 31 May 2018].

Copp, Tara, "Here's the blueprint for Erik Prince's \$5 billion plan to privatize the Afghanistan war," *Military Times* [5 September 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2018/09/05/heres-the-blueprint-for-erik-princes-5-billion-plan-to-privatize-the-afghanistan-war/> [accessed 6 September 2018].

Cordesman, Anthony, "Learning from the War: 'Who Lost Afghanistan?' versus Learning 'Why We Lost'," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* [19 July 2021]. [https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/210719\\_Cordesman\\_Learning\\_War.pdf](https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/210719_Cordesman_Learning_War.pdf) [accessed 21 July 2021].

I am a fan of Tony Cordesman's work over the decades that I have been reading it. This is not for everyone for three reasons. One, the work is long (63 pages, although there are a lot of graphs). Two, there are a lot of wonkish terms and phrases that might lose many readers. Three, this is an unfinished project that basically lays out what a proper and thoughtful history of the war in Afghanistan needs to include to provide the necessary material for a full and complete understanding of what happened and why.

In both Iraq and Afghanistan there were two wars. In Afghanistan they were a war against al-Qaeda and their "state" sponsored supporters and a counterinsurgency against the Taliban seeking to fight the invader and occupier and regain their position of authority. The US won the first war (as it also did in Iraq), but struggled and lost the second war. Cordesman gives some insight and raises a lot of questions about how that second failure occurred.

Cordesman, Anthony, "The Lessons of the Afghan War that No One Will Want to Learn," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* [15 June 2022]. [https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/220615\\_Cordesman\\_Afghan\\_War.pdf?L50A\\_hcuzFYWDGFiYwdUshaVX2Do5huU](https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/220615_Cordesman_Afghan_War.pdf?L50A_hcuzFYWDGFiYwdUshaVX2Do5huU) [accessed 7 December 2022].

This is a long read, but it contains a lot of good material. Tony Cordesman asks some excellent questions at the end, but throughout the paper, he suggests area and ways that the U.S. could have done better. I will highlight a few in my own words:

- Realistic objectives and appreciation of the environment
- Better accounting and accountability of aid and assistance
- Proper timing of effort. He asserts that the U.S. didn't provide security forces fast enough when there was a small threat and then once the Taliban was a threat the effort was too slow to respond
- Insufficient transparency from military, government, and development leadership

Coren, Anna, Sandi Sidhu, and Tim Lister, "Taliban fighters execute 22 Afghan commandos as they try to surrender," *CNN* [13 July 2021]. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/07/13/asia/afghanistan-taliban-commandos-killed-intl-hnk/index.html> [accessed 14 July 2021].

I am deeply saddened and angry. I am late to the news, but I was deeply saddened to learn yesterday that a former student of mine from the 2019 US Army CGSC course, Sohrab Azimi, was murdered in Afghanistan on 16 June 2021.

Sohrab was a great student and a powerful combat leader for his country. He was the kind of man Afghanistan needs to hold off Taliban advances. That was his job, in fact, to retake villages and towns that had been attacked or taken by the Taliban. See this article as a fitting expression of his capability (<https://afghanistanpeacecampaign.org/2021/06/23/death-of-famed-afghan-commander-in-taliban-massacre-highlights-the-countrys-struggles-and-fears/>).

I am angry for reasons that I have expressed many times in this forum - the ignorance of the non-Afghans involved in leading, fighting, and reporting on the war in Afghanistan. It is as if no one understood/understands what Afghanistan was/is and no one understood/understands the purposes for fighting in Afghanistan. I understand that this anger is somewhat misplaced as there are many who do understand and know, but the unfortunate reality is that they are almost never the ones in charge or from whom we hear about the events there (if we hear anything at all).

This article and video capture the nature of the Taliban and just some of the ignorance of reporters in understanding the character of the war there.

Correll, Diana Stancy, "Taliban reaches agreement with US to block al Qaeda, Islamic State from Afghanistan: Report," *Washington Examiner* [24 January 2019]. <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/taliban-reaches-agreement-with-us-to-block-al-qaeda-islamic-state-from-afghanistan-report> [accessed 26 January 2019].

Davis, Daniel L., "It's Time to Ask the Hard Questions on Afghanistan", *National Interest* [3 January 2016]. <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-skeptics/its-time-ask-the-hard-questions-afghanistan-14788> [accessed 4 January 2016].

The op/ed does not offer hard questions, but one question – what will be done with extra troops that isn't being done now. Simple question and it needs to be asked.

Dawn, "'How did IS emerge in Afghanistan under US watch?' asks Hamid Karzai," *Dawn* [8 October 2017]. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1362481/how-did-is-emerge-in-afghanistan-under-us-watch-asks-hamid-karzai> [accessed 9 October 2017].

deGrandpre, Andrew and Alex Horton, "Here are six costly failures from America's longest war. No. 1: Cashmere goats," *Military Times* [22 August 2017]. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/08/21/goats-camouflage-and-ghost-schools-16-years-of-u-s-taxpayer-waste-in-afghanistan/> [accessed 23 August 2017].

Dobbins, James, Andrew Radin, and Laurel E. Miller, "Engage, Isolate, or Oppose: American Policy Toward the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan," RAND Corporation [May 2022]. <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PEA1540-1.html> [accessed 8 June 2022].

Doherty, Ben, "How the 'good war' went bad: elite soldiers from Australia, UK and US face a reckoning,"



*The Guardian* [1 June 2021]. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/jun/02/how-the-good-war-went-bad-elite-soldiers-from-australia-uk-and-us-face-a-reckoning> [accessed 2 June 2021].

What will be the accounting from Afghanistan? I expect that most Americans do not want to know about what happened there in any detail. If an investigation begins, there will be little expectation to protect the soldiers or senior leaders implicated in any actions. I get the sense, that people are exhausted by Afghanistan and just want it to go away.

Dyer, Andrew, "Nation's top Marine invokes World War II when talking Afghanistan time commitment: 'We're still in Germany; we're still in Japan'," *The San Diego Union Tribune* [12 September 2018]. <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/military/sd-me-marine-commandant20180912-story.html> [accessed 13 September 2018].

Errazzouki, Samia and Lori Hinnant, "Moroccan freed from Guantanamo slams IS, reflects on torture", *The Washington Post* [16 February 2016]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/moroccan-freed-from-guantanamo-slams-is-reflects-on-torture/2016/02/16/7d17e9e8-d4d7-11e5-a65b-587e721fb231\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/moroccan-freed-from-guantanamo-slams-is-reflects-on-torture/2016/02/16/7d17e9e8-d4d7-11e5-a65b-587e721fb231_story.html) [accessed 17 February 2016].

Faiez, Rahim and Amir Shah, "Double Kabul Suicide Bombing Kills Dozens, Including Journalists," *Military.com* [30 April 2018]. <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2018/04/30/double-kabul-suicide-bombing-kills-dozens-including-journalists.html> [accessed 30 April 2018].

Fajez, Rahim and Cara Anna, "Islamic State claims bombing at Kabul wedding that killed 63," *AP News* [18 August 2019]. <https://apnews.com/b5ceeb0cfb33d4d73aaaadf5eee19fe9d> [accessed 18 August 2019].

Faizy, Sultan and Shashank Bengali, "Hope. Concern. Resignation. Afghans have mixed feelings about the possibility of more U.S. troops," *Los Angeles Times* [15 May 2017]. <http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-afghanistan-us-troops-2017-htmlstory.html> [accessed 16 May 2017].

Fritz, Ian, "What I Learned While Eavesdropping on the Taliban," *Defense One* (originally published in *The Atlantic*) [21 August 2021]. <https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2021/08/what-i-learned-while-eavesdropping-taliban/184676/> [accessed 23 August 2021].

The Taliban rarely provide humorous stories, but this article includes a couple. It also explains the persistent will that the Taliban story effectively provided by connecting to the Islamist narrative. Understanding this story-narrative connection and how it provides power is crucial to appreciating narrative war.

- ★ Gall, Carlotta, "Saudis Bankroll Taliban, Even as King Officially Supports Afghan Government," *The New York Times* [6 December 2016]. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/06/world/asia/saudi-arabia-afghanistan.html> [accessed 6 December 2016].

Gall always writes brilliantly and this article is worth reading to better understand Afghanistan/Taliban/Kingdom of Saudi Arabia dynamics.

Gannon, Kathy, "Taliban official says group spoke with US official," *Military Times* [29 July 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2018/07/29/taliban-official-says-group-spoke-with-us-official/> [accessed 30 July 2018].

- ★ Gannon, Kathy, "After 17 years, many Afghans blame US for unending war," *Military Times* [14 November 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2018/11/14/after-17-years-many-afghans-blame-us-for-unending-war/> [accessed 14 November 2018].

This is a must read article for those who question the importance of narrative. This article expresses what happens when the actions and narrative are not in alignment. We are now the bad guys. Imagine a world where the Taliban is preferred over the US. That is what a bad narrative leads to.

- Gannon, Kathy, "2018 was the deadliest year for Afghan civilians since the UN started keeping track," *Military Times* [24 February 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2019/02/24/2018-was-the-deadliest-year-for-afghan-civilians-since-the-un-started-keeping-track/> [accessed 25 February 2019].
- Gannon, Kathy, "Jihad, history link Taliban to al-Qaida in Afghanistan," *Military Times* [17 September 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2019/09/17/jihad-history-link-taliban-to-al-qaida-in-afghanistan/> [accessed 18 September 2019].
- Gannon, Kathy, "Anger grows at civilian deaths by US, Afghan forces," *Military Times* [6 October 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2019/10/06/anger-grows-at-civilian-deaths-by-us-afghan-forces/> [accessed 7 October 2019].
- Gannon, Kathy, "Afghanistan's Karzai says American cash fed corruption," *Military Times* [11 December 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2019/12/11/afghanistans-karzai-says-american-cash-fed-corruption/> [accessed 11 December 2019].
- Gannon, Kathy, "Taliban say they are readying for talks with Kabul leaders," *Military Times* [8 June 2020]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/06/08/taliban-say-they-are-readying-for-talks-with-kabul-leaders/> [accessed 9 June 2020].
- Garland, Chad, "'Serious measures' taken as Taliban attack Farah city in western Afghanistan," *Stars & Stripes* [15 May 2018]. <https://www.stripes.com/news/middle-east/serious-measures-taken-as-taliban-attack-farah-city-in-western-afghanistan-1.527060> [accessed 15 May 2018].
- Ghani, Ashraf, "I Will Negotiate With the Taliban Anywhere," *The New York Times* [27 June 2018]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/27/opinion/ashraf-ghani-afghanistan-president-peace-talks-taliban-.html> [accessed 27 June 2018].
- Gibbons-Neff, Thomas, "How Obama's Afghanistan plan is forcing the Army to replace soldiers with contractors," *Washington Post* [1 June 2016]. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2016/06/01/how-obamas-afghanistan-plan-is-forcing-the-army-to-replace-soldiers-with-contractors/> [accessed 2 June 2016].
- Gibbons-Neff, Thomas, "\$174 Million Afghan Drone Program Is Riddled With Problems, U.S. Report Says," *The New York Times* [16 July 2020]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/16/world/asia/afghan-drone-program.html> [accessed 21 July 2020].
- Gibbons-Neff, Thomas and Helen Cooper, "Newest U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan Mirrors Past Plans for Retreat," *The New York Times* [28 July 2018]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/28/world/asia/trump-afghanistan-strategy-retreat.html> [accessed 30 July 2018].
- ★ Gibbons-Neff, Thomas and Najim Rahim, "Taliban Enter Key Cities in Afghanistan's North After Swift Offensive," *The New York Times* [20 June 2021]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/20/world/asia/afghanistan-kunduz-taliban.html> [accessed 21 June 2021].

The story of Afghanistan is a story of maddening ignorance. In *Abandoning Vietnam: How America Left and South Vietnam Lost Its War*, Jim Willbanks argues that one of the reasons that South Vietnam fell was because the U.S. military and government made the South Vietnamese military look like the U.S. military. By doing that, the South Vietnamese military required the same access to resources as did the U.S. military which were not available in 1974 and 1975. Here we are more than 45 years after the collapse of South Vietnam and 17 years after Willbanks published his book and this one mistake from Vietnam is being played out again as we watch the Afghan National Army struggle against the Taliban.

If this were the only mistake then what is happening in Afghanistan wouldn't be quite so sad. This article fails

to identify what most Americans, in general, and most military professionals, more specifically do not know about Afghanistan in 1996: how fast the Taliban captured that country. The Taliban attacked with lightening raids that took villages, towns, and cities faster than their opponents could recover or regroup. It looks like the Taliban have not forgotten their own history – they seem to be trying to experience again the benefits of 25 years ago.

When the Taliban defeated their opponents in the mid-1990s, their opponents often just pulled back to their defensible tribal areas. The Taliban never controlled all of Afghanistan. It is possible that everyone may try to relive some form of that earlier success or failure.

Gibbons-Neff, Thomas and Taimoor Shah, “An Ancient Hill and Forgotten Dead: Afghanistan’s Haunted Outpost,” *The New York Times* [31 October 2020].

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/31/world/asia/afghanistan-haunted-outpost.html> [accessed 2 November 2020].

Goodwin, Liz, “A veil of secrecy fuels doubts on Afghan war,” *The Boston Globe* [12 May 2018].

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/nation/2018/05/12/decline-afghan-army-was-hidden-pentagon-secrecy/WMfkVlHicQ5gGpnevQRmVl/story.html> [accessed 14 May 2018].

★ Gopal, Anand, “The Other Afghan Women: In the countryside, the endless killing of civilians turned women against the occupiers who claimed to be helping them.” *The New Yorker* [6 September 2021]. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/09/13/the-other-afghan-women> [accessed 11 October 2021].

This is depressing and poignant. It is also long, but I strongly recommend this. This is further support for what I have been writing about narrative war over the past weeks, months, and years. In this article the author Anand Gopal, who also wrote one of the more interesting books on the Afghanistan War, describes the dynamics of the American war in Afghanistan in the countryside and small villages.

Even though this was something that I expected, it was still a shockingly disappointing reminder of how little the Americans understood Afghanistan and its relatively recent history. As you read it you will see the difficulty in what it means to bring stability to an unstable country. Often it means that the occupier seeks to stabilize quickly which means turning to those who produce short term results – often war lords – as was the case in Afghanistan.

Thank you Patricia "Tricia" DeGennaro for bringing this to my attention. I am very grateful to Have read it.

Gould, Joe, “McCain offers Afghanistan strategy amid Trump’s indecision,” *Defense News* [10 August 2017]. <http://www.defensenews.com/congress/2017/08/10/mccain-offers-afghanistan-strategy-amid-trumps-indecision/> [accessed 11 August 2017].

Gould, Joe, “Biden defends Afghanistan pullout as Taliban gains ground,” *Military Times* [8 July 2021]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2021/07/08/biden-defends-afghanistan-pullout-as-taliban-gains-ground/> [accessed 19 July 2021].

Grady, John, “Marine Commander in Southwest Afghanistan Strikes Optimistic Tone on Progress in Fight Against Taliban,” *US Naval Institute News* [3 April 2018]. <https://news.usni.org/2018/04/03/marine-commander-southwest-afghanistan-strikes-optimistic-tone-fight-taliban> [accessed 6 April 2018].

Grady, John, “Panel: U.S. Began Afghanistan War with Unrealistic Expectations,” *US Naval Institute News* [8 July 2021]. <https://news.usni.org/2021/07/08/panel-u-s-began-afghanistan-war-with-unrealistic-expectations> [accessed 19 July 2021].

The article includes a link to the CSIS panel discussion on YouTube. <https://youtu.be/m6hyVHxMX3Q>. This is a great panel discussion with two legitimate experts including Carter Malkasian.

Grazier, Dan, “Afghanistan Proved Eisenhower Correct,” *POGO* [1 November 2021].

[https://www.pogo.org/analysis/2021/11/afghanistan-proved-eisenhower-correct/?fbclid=IwAR0ugTbRH5u5PftrcUdubBDqHOrCHBH\\_b3JlC5wvUHKPbKZsxV4zk4pejFw](https://www.pogo.org/analysis/2021/11/afghanistan-proved-eisenhower-correct/?fbclid=IwAR0ugTbRH5u5PftrcUdubBDqHOrCHBH_b3JlC5wvUHKPbKZsxV4zk4pejFw) [accessed 4 November 2021].

- ★ Greentree, Todd, "What Went Wrong in Afghanistan?" *Parameters* 51, no. 4 (2021): 7-22, <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters/vol51/iss4/3> [17 November 2021].. <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3088&context=parameters> [accessed 4 December 2021].

A must read for appreciating the war in Afghanistan.

This is a fabulous summary of what happened, what went wrong, why it went wrong, and how it might have gone right. The best single article for appreciating the problems and a better solution. It is a little long for a light read at 15 pages of material, but the content is worth it. The footnotes alone make this article a treasure trove for those who want to learn or teach about the war in Afghanistan.

The author does a brilliant job of identifying how the United States was its own worst enemy in Afghanistan and how that behavior created an accidental war after the collapse of the Taliban.

- Gul, Ayaz, "Afghan War Causes Record Bloodshed Amid US Troop Exit," *VOA News* [1 July 2021]. <https://www.voanews.com/south-central-asia/afghan-war-causes-record-bloodshed-amid-us-troop-exit> [accessed 19 July 2021].

- Hamid, Tamim, "Fight Will Continue Alongside Peace Efforts: Miller," *Tolo News* [7 April 2019]. <https://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/war-will-continue-alongside-peace-efforts-miller> [accessed 10 April 2019].

- Hannun, Marya, "Journalism as jihad in Afghanistan," *Columbia Journalism Review* [14 August 2018]. <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/journalism-as-jihad-in-afghanistan.php> [accessed 8 October 2018].

- Hashimi, Zakeria, "Afghan forces search for Taliban fighters after major attack," *Yahoo* [10 August 2018]. <https://www.yahoo.com/news/us-launches-airstrikes-taliban-attack-afghan-city-063037016.html> [accessed 11 August 2018].

- Hasrat-Nazimi, Waslat, "Did Afghan minerals change Trump's mind about Afghanistan?" *Deutsche Welle* [29 August 2017]. <http://www.dw.com/en/did-afghan-minerals-change-trumps-mind-about-afghanistan/a-40281449> [accessed 30 August 2017].

- Holbrook, David, "Pashto War Poetry," Unpublished Paper for Seminar on the Language, Culture and History of Afghanistan, Center for Afghanistan Studies, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 11 September 2009.

I worked with David in Iraq in 2010-2011 and he is a thoughtful and very well prepared regional specialist. This is a paper in support of academic work for the human terrain system program.

- ★ International Crisis Group, "How Islamist Militants Elsewhere View the Taliban's Victory in Afghanistan," *International Crisis Group* [27 October 2021]. <https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/afghanistan-360-27x21.pdf> [accessed 3 November 2021].

This is a fabulous summary of Islamist militant groups as they are at the end of 2021. It also provides wonderful insights about the intra-Islamist struggles and differences. This is a great single article to read to appreciate that there is no Islamist monolith. Each group has its own interests that are driven by interpretive, regional, cultural, and historical factors. Appreciating the variations in the Islamist world requires an appreciation of those differences. This article provides an excellent starting point for such understanding.

- Jain, Rupam, "U.N. says scores killed during Afghanistan voter registration drive," *Reuters* [10 May 2018]. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-election-report/u-n-says-scores-killed-during-afghanistan-voter-registration-drive-idUSKBN1IB2GA> [accessed 11 May 2018].

- Jason, Mike, "What We Got Wrong in Afghanistan," *The Atlantic* [12 August 2021]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/08/how-america-failed-afghanistan/619740/> [accessed 17 August 2021].

- Jennings, Nathan, "Is America Winning to Lose in Afghanistan?" *Real Clear Defense* [27 March 2018]. [https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/03/27/is\\_america\\_winning\\_to\\_lose\\_in\\_afghanista](https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/03/27/is_america_winning_to_lose_in_afghanista)

[n\\_113247.html](#) [accessed 28 March 2018].

- ★ Jensen, Benjamin, "How the Taliban did it: Inside the 'operational art' of its military victory," *Atlantic Council* [15 August 2021]. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/how-the-taliban-did-it-inside-the-operational-art-of-its-military-victory/> [accessed 4 September 2021].

"The second article investigates the operational art (author's term) employed by the Taliban to converge four main lines of effort to collapse the ANA and defeat the Afghan government. He does a good job of concisely explaining how they prepared the theater, achieved physical and psychological dislocation in-depth, and employed narrative warfare to enable rapid offensive military operations. And yes, his use of operational art loosely falls within the Joint and Army definition (my opinion)." Quoted from email of Nathan Jennings.

Jones, Seth G. "Why the Taliban Isn't Winning in Afghanistan," *Foreign Affairs* [3 January 2018]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/afghanistan/2018-01-03/why-taliban-isnt-winning-afghanistan> [accessed 18 February 2018].

- ★ Joscelyn, Thomas, "Losing a War," *The Weekly Standard* [27 August 2018]. <https://www.weeklystandard.com/thomas-joscelyn/losing-a-war> [accessed 30 August 2018].

This is an excellent summary of the failed policy moves by successive administrations with respect to the now seventeen year old war in Afghanistan. The information in the article displays a significant amount of ignorance both of the nature of the opponent and of our own policy objectives. The US government does not seem to know what it wants in Afghanistan nor with whom they need to work to get that unknown thing.

Joscelyn, Thomas, "The Afghanistan War Is Over. We Lost." *The Weekly Standard* [18 October 2018]. <https://www.weeklystandard.com/thomas-joscelyn/the-afghanistan-war-is-over-we-lost> [accessed 19 October 2018].

Joscelyn, Thomas, "Taliban assaults 'anti-Islamic' NGO in Kabul, citing its promotion of 'western culture'," *Long War Journal* [8 May 2019]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/05/taliban-assaults-anti-islamic-ngo-in-kabul-citing-its-promotion-of-western-culture.php> [accessed 9 May 2019].

Joscelyn, Thomas, "Al Qaeda video emphasizes unity with Taliban's Islamic emirate," *Long War Journal* [11 May 2019]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/05/al-qaeda-video-emphasizes-unity-with-talibans-islamic-emirate.php> [accessed 13 May 2019].

Joscelyn, Thomas and Bill Roggio, "Why the Taliban should be required to renounce al Qaeda in any deal with US," *Long War Journal* [19 March 2019]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/03/why-the-taliban-should-be-required-to-renounce-al-qaeda-in-any-deal-with-us.php> [accessed 21 March 2019].

Judson, Jen, "SIGAR: 'High-Risk List' Shows Continued Erosion in Afghanistan Reconstruction," *Defense News* [11 January 2017]. <http://www.defensenews.com/articles/us-navy-surface-forces-urged-to-become-more-aggressive> [accessed 12 January 2017].

Afghanistan is getting worse. It is probably worse in January 2017 than any time since January 2002. This article provides a summation of the problems from the SIGAR.

Kaplan, Robert D. "Time to Get Out of Afghanistan," *The New York Times* [1 January 2019]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/01/opinion/afghanistan-war-american-troops-withdraw.html> [accessed 2 January 2019].

Keller, Jared, "Taliban Fighters Massacre Scores Of Afghanistan Security Forces — Again," *Task & Purpose* [10 September 2018]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/taliban-massacre-afghanistan-security-forces/> [accessed 11 September 2018].

Keller, Jared, "The US still doesn't know how many Afghan security forces actually exist, surprising no one," *Task & Purpose* [3 August 2020]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/news/afghanistan-troop-levels-sigar-report> [accessed 4 August 2020].



Keller, Jared, "Insider attacks against US troops in Afghanistan have dropped to a historic low. Here's why," *Task & Purpose* [2 February 2021]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/analysis/insider-attacks-afghanistan-2020/> [accessed 3 February 2021].

Keller, Jared, "Here's all the US military equipment that likely ended up in Taliban hands: A windfall for the Taliban." *Task & Purpose* [18 August 2021]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/news/taliban-weapons-afghanistan/> [accessed 19 August 2021].

Keller, Jared, "Here's all the US military equipment that ended up in Taliban hands during the fall of Kabul: Money well spent!" *Task & Purpose* [17 August 2022]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/news/military-weapons-taliban-afghanistan/> [accessed 23 August 2022].

Great summary of the equipment lost to the Taliban - \$7.12 billion worth of gear.

Khattak, Daud, "Anxious Times In Pakistan's Pagan Valley," *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty* [14 April 2019]. <https://www.rferl.org/a/pakistans-pagan-valley/29867489.html> [accessed 15 April 2019].

Kheel, Rebecca, "Five things to know about emerging US, Taliban peace deal," *The Hill* [23 February 2020]. <https://thehill.com/policy/defense/484149-five-things-to-know-about-emerging-us-taliban-peace-deal> [accessed 24 February 2020].

Kube, Courtney, "Taliban cooperation included protecting Americans from possible terror attack at airport," *NBC News* [31 August 2021]. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/taliban-cooperation-included-protecting-americans-possible-terror-attack-airport-n1278166> [accessed 1 September 2021].

This is a sad example of the normalization of the Taliban as they are portrayed as something like a good guy.

Kudo, Timothy, "Blame the Generals for Our Defeat in Afghanistan," *The new Republic* [12 July 2021]. <https://newrepublic.com/article/162955/afghanistan-war-generals-failed-america> [accessed 17 August 2021].

Kugelman, Michael, "Why Did Washington Wait So Long To Take Its Drone War To Baluchistan?" *War on the Rocks* [7 June 2016]. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/06/why-did-washington-wait-so-long-to-take-its-drone-war-to-baluchistan/> [accessed 7 June 2016].

Lamb, Christina, "Chronicle of a Defeat Foretold: Why America Failed in Afghanistan," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2021 [22 June 2021]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/review-essay/2021-06-22/chronicle-defeat-foretold> [accessed 30 June 2021].

I am excited to read this book. I am a big fan of Carter Malkasian's work and highly recommend it. This review/discussion of the book is a good preview of what one can expect. If you have read *War Comes to Garmser* (as you should) then the tone and direction of the material will not come as a surprise.

I disagree with this author's criticism of Malkasian's emphasis on religion as a motivation. I have encountered this attitude multiple times in my academic and government work. People who are less or non-religious fail to grasp the powerful and sometimes all-encompassing shaping motivation provided by religion. Malkasian lived and worked in Afghanistan and he did so in a district center away from Kabul. I give him the nod in expressing the 'on the ground' perspective of the war.

Of course, the book will be a Greek tragedy as the story of Afghanistan is one of hubristic ignorance, but I have already said enough on that topic.

Lamothe, Dan, "Trump's military cuts in Afghanistan highlight an array of divisions in a 19-year-old conflict," *The Washington Post* [18 November 2020]. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2020/11/18/trumps-military-cuts-afghanistan-highlight-an-array-divisions-19-year-old-conflict/> [accessed 20 November 2020].

Lamothe, Dan, "Declassified Afghanistan reports back U.S. commanders who said Biden team was

indecisive during crisis,” *The Washington Post* [12 February 2022].  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/02/12/afghanistan-evacuation-after-action-reports/> [accessed 16 February 2022].

Lamothe, Dan and Alex Horton, “Documents reveal U.S. military’s frustration with White House, diplomats over Afghanistan evacuation,” *The Washington Post* [8 February 2022].  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/02/08/afghanistan-evacuation-investigation/> [accessed 16 February 2022].

I am uncertain in why this article was published. It defends the military position that they gave Pres Biden and his administration recommendations that they refused to accept.

Lamothe, Dan and Missy Ryan, “On Sept. 11, the U.S. military wrestles with wars that won’t go away,” *The Washington Post* [11 September 2019]. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2019/09/11/sept-us-military-wrestles-with-wars-that-wont-go-away/> [accessed 15 September 2019].

Landler, Mark, “The Obama Era: Part 3, The “Good War”: The Afghan War and the Evolution of Obama,” *The New York Times* [1 January 2017]. <http://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/01/world/asia/obama-afghanistan-war.html> [accessed 4 January 2017].

This is an interesting article explaining the changing of the president with respect to Afghanistan and broader policy issues over time. The main points are questioning the efficacy of military action without a policy and without a reliable partner.

Landon, Douglas, “CIA’s Former Counterterrorism Chief for the Region: Afghanistan, Not An Intelligence Failure — Something Much Worse,” *Just Security* [18 August 2021].  
<https://www.justsecurity.org/77801/cias-former-counterterrorism-chief-for-the-region-afghanistan-not-an-intelligence-failure-something-much-worse/> [accessed 22 September 2021].

Lawrence, J.P. “Business in discarded US military goods is booming as Kandahar base empties out,” *Stars & Stripes* [1 November 2020]. <https://www.stripes.com/news/business-in-discarded-us-military-goods-is-booming-as-kandahar-base-empties-out-1.650666> [accessed 2 November 2020].

Lee, Matthew, Kathy Gannon, and Howard Altman, “All US troops to leave Afghanistan in 14 months if Taliban meets commitments of peace deal,” *Military Times* [29 February 2020].  
<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/02/29/all-us-troops-to-leave-afghanistan-in-14-months-if-taliban-meets-commitments-of-peace-deal-signed-today/> [accessed 2 March 2020].

Lee, Wayne E., David L. Preston, Anthony E. Carlson, and David Silbey, “Book excerpt: ‘The Other Face of Battle: America’s Forgotten Wars and the Experience of Combat’,” *Military Times* [8 June 2021].  
<https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2021/06/08/book-excerpt-the-other-face-of-battle-americas-forgotten-wars-and-the-experience-of-combat/> [accessed 19 July 2021].

Detailed information on the Battle of Makuan on 15 September 2010.

Lillis, Katie Bo, “Escape from Kabul: Inside the volunteer effort by US troops to rescue their families from Afghanistan,” *CNN* [21 October 2021]. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/20/politics/escape-afghanistan-private-efforts-military-service-family-members/index.html> [accessed 31 October 2021].

Linehan, Adam, “Medal Of Honor Recipient Clint Romesha On Why Soldiers Go To War,” *Task & Purpose* [13 April 2016]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/leadership/medal-honor-recipient-clinton-romesha-soldiers-go-war> [accessed 1 July 2020].

Lobe, Jim, “Three major networks devoted a full five minutes to Afghanistan in 2020,” *Responsible Statecraft* [20 August 2021]. <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2021/08/20/three-major-networks-devoted-a-full-five-minutes-to-afghanistan-in-2020/> [accessed 25 August 2021].

Critical point. When no one is watching then no one cares and anything can happen.

This is a sad point about modern American connections to military intervention. We teach military officers that the all-volunteer force was a good thing for the US Army. That was true, in a way. I have come to believe that it was bad for the country. Effectively, the US military is like the local fire department. No one thinks about it unless their neighbor's house is on fire. No one cares if the fire department is properly trained or equipped. That is because everyone assumes that that is what their taxes are for.

The US military has become a global fire department. Since that means that it fights fires distant from US shores then most US citizens don't care. It doesn't affect them. Their sons and daughters are not at risk. Effectively, the military is becoming a family business with multiple generations serving and more couples where both spouses are in uniform.

This isn't good for the republic. The citizenry needs to have skin in the game or they won't care what is done in their name thousands of miles from their homes. And, why should they. I don't ask the city council about the fire department.

Losey, Stephen, "Afghanistan: The War That Made War Normal," *Military.com* [23 August 2021]. <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/08/23/afghanistan-war-made-war-normal.html> [accessed 24 August 2021].

Interesting observations about the normalization of war and the impact on soldiers and on special operations forces.

MacDonald, Myra, "Why Did It All Go So Wrong? An Arab Veteran of the Anti-Soviet Jihad Speaks," *War on the Rocks* [4 March 2019]. <https://warontherocks.com/2019/03/why-did-it-all-go-so-wrong-an-arab-veteran-of-the-anti-soviet-jihad-speaks/> [accessed 11 March 2019].

Malkasian, Carter. 2020. "How the Good War Went Bad: America's Slow-Motion Failure in Afghanistan." *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2020. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/afghanistan/2020-02-10/how-good-war-went-bad> [accessed 12 February 2020].

Mansfield, David, "Bombing Heroin Labs in Afghanistan: The Latest Act in the Theatre of Counternarcotics," The London School of Economics and Political Science International Drug Policy Unit [January 2018]. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/united-states/Assets/Documents/Heroin-Labs-in-Afghanistan-Mansfield.pdf> [accessed 28 April 2018].

Mashal, Mujib, "Why the Taliban's Assault on Ghazni Matters," *The New York Times* [13 August 2018]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/13/world/asia/why-the-talibans-assault-on-ghazni-matters-for-afghanistan-and-the-us.html> [accessed 16 August 2018].

Mashal, Mujib and Thomas Gibbons-Neff, "How a Taliban Assassin Got Close Enough to Kill a General," *The New York Times* [2 November 2018]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/02/world/asia/taliban-attack-raziq-alliance.html> [accessed 5 November 2018].

This has a great line about being better to kill the one Afghan general than 500 Americans.

Mashal, Mujib, Eric Schmitt, Najim Rahim, and Rukmini Callimachi, "Afghan Contractor Handed Out Russian Cash to Kill Americans, Officials Say," *The New York Times* [1 July 2020]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/world/asia/afghan-russia-bounty-middleman.html> [accessed 2 July 2020].

Matissek, Jahara, "Requiem for the Afghan 'Fabergé Egg' Army: Why Did It Crack So Quickly?" *Modern War Institute* [28 October 2021]. <https://mwi.usma.edu/requiem-for-the-afghan-faberge-egg-army-why-did-it-crack-so-quickly/> [accessed 6 December 2021].

McChrystal, Stanley A. "COMISAF's Initial Assessment," Headquarters, International Security Assistance Force, Kabul, Afghanistan [30 August 2009]. [http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment\\_Redacted\\_092109.pdf?sid=ST2009092003140](http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment_Redacted_092109.pdf?sid=ST2009092003140) [accessed 12

May 2016].

McInnis, Kathleen J. and Andrew Feickert, "Additional Troops for Afghanistan? Considerations for Congress," Congressional Research Service [19 May 2017].

Good summation of problems and issues associated with US military involvement in Afghanistan.

McIntyre, Jamie, "Why victory isn't the goal in Afghanistan," *Washington Examiner* [13 November 2018]. <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/defense-national-security/why-victory-isnt-the-goal-in-afghanistan> [accessed 13 November 2018].

McKay, Hollie, "Exclusive: Embedded with the Last Afghan Special Forces Team in Mazar-I-Sharif," *Coffee or Die* [22 August 2021]. <https://coffeedie.com/afghan-special-forces-mazar/> [accessed 25 August 2021].

McKay, Holly, "What Life Is Like Under the Afghan Taliban?" *The National Interest* [16 November 2021]. <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/what-life-under-afghan-taliban-196298> [accessed 24 June 2022].

Meyers, Josh, "The secret story of how America lost the drug war with the Taliban," *Politico* [8 July 2018]. <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/07/08/obama-afghanistan-drug-war-taliban-616316> [accessed 9 July 2018].

Miakhel, Shahmahmood, "The Importance of Tribal Structures and Pakhtunwali in Afghanistan; Their role in security and governance," Yahoo.com [Unknown]. <http://pashtoonkhwa.com/files/articles/Miakhel%20-%20Importance%20of%20Tribal%20Structures%20in%20Afghanistan.pdf> [accessed 2 December 2018].

Miklaucic, Michael, "Letting go with a win and moving on from Afghanistan," *The Hill* [20 July 2021]. <https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/563291-letting-go-with-a-win-and-moving-on-from-afghanistan> [accessed 21 July 2021].

I strongly disagree with this author's recommendation and interpretation of the war; however, I have met and spoken with enough military and government personnel who agree with this interpretation of events to recognize that it has some value. For me, the value comes from recognizing the argument and more clearly seeing where and why I disagree.

Every year I ask my students to evaluate past US wars on whether or not they were a win or a loss and then to assess to what degree the war was one or the other. This is a wonderful exercise in communicating the "Princess Bride" problem that exists in the US military with the use of the word win: "I do not think it means what you think it means." For the most part, the officers may agree on whether or not we won WWII, but they don't agree on the degree to which that war was a win. This will certainly be a future blog post, but the point for now is that the word win has lost almost all meaning and this article expresses why this is true.

If winning is the accomplishment of objectives that you determine then this can and often does lead to a sort of circular logic. We set objectives that we could achieve, we achieved them, and therefore we won. By such logic, we won in Vietnam because we won every battle (I recognize that this is disputed) and one could go on to define every military engagement as a win by such a perspective. I will save for the blog post my definition of winning, but here I want to express that it must have an objective meaning or it will become meaningless, like so many other words in the present environment and that would be a tragedy.

Milburn, Andrew, "Opinion: Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin must resign," *Task & Purpose* [13 October 2021]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/opinion/defense-secretary-lloyd-austin-must-resign/> [accessed 13 October 2021].

I don't know how true this is but based on personal experience with former General Austin I am inclined to believe it and I love the criticism.

Moore, Jack, "U.S. Military in Afghanistan Says Sorry For Offensive Leaflets With Dog Insult To Muslims,"

*Newsweek* [6 September 2017]. <http://www.newsweek.com/us-military-afghanistan-says-sorry-offensive-leaflets-dog-insult-muslims-659982> [accessed 11 September 2017].

Myers, Meghann, "Green Berets who liberated Afghanistan from the Taliban tell their stories in new documentary," *Army Times* [22 March 2017]. <https://www.armytimes.com/articles/green-berets-who-liberated-afghanistan-from-the-taliban-tell-their-stories-in-new-documentary> [accessed 24 March 2017].

Myers, Meghann, "Trump says he has a plan to win the Afghanistan war in 10 days," *Military Times* [22 July 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2019/07/22/trump-says-he-has-a-plan-to-win-the-afghanistan-war-in-10-days/> [accessed 23 July 2019].

Myers, Meghann and Robert Burns, "'It was a mistake.' CENTCOM admits Aug. 29 drone strike killed civilians, not ISIS," *Military Times* [17 September 2021]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/breaking-news/2021/09/17/pentagon-reverses-itself-calls-deadly-kabul-strike-an-error/> [accessed 22 September 2021].

Myers, Meghann, Robert Burns, Matthew Lee, and Ellen Knickmeyer, "About 8,000 US troops are deploying to secure evacuations from Kabul," *Military Times* [12 August 2021]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/08/12/about-8000-us-troops-are-deploying-to-secure-evacuations-from-kabul/> [accessed 23 August 2021].

Nabi, Zuhal, "The Effective Factors of Economic Underdevelopment in Afghanistan," *Afghanistan Center at Kabul University* [20 October 2019]. <https://acku.edu.af/2019/10/20/the-effective-factors-of-economic-underdevelopment-in-afghanistan/> [accessed 5 March 2022].

NATO, "Episode 22 – Asfandiyar Mir and AfPak, One Year Since the Taliban Return, August 2022," NATO [August 2022]. <https://deepportal.hq.nato.int/eacademy/deep-dive-podcasts/episode-22/> [accessed 5 September 2022].

Nordland, Rod and Jawad Sukhanyar, "U.S.-Backed Effort to Fight Afghan Corruption Is a Near-Total Failure, Audit Finds," *The New York Times* [27 September 2016]. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/28/world/asia/afghanistan-corruption-financial-disclosure.html> [accessed 28 September 2016].

Nordland, Rod and David Zucchino, "As U.S. Nears a Pullout Deal, Afghan Army Is on the Defensive," *The New York Times* [12 August 2019]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/12/world/asia/afghanistan-army-taliban.html> [accessed 13 August 2019].

- ★ Nossiter, Adam, "The Taliban Think They Have Already Won, Peace Deal or Not," *The New York Times* [30 March 2021]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/30/world/asia/taliban-victory-afghanistan.html> [accessed 31 March 2021].

Discouraging, but not unexpected. The number one question all Americans involved with national security should be asking themselves is why after nearly 20 years of fighting is the Taliban close to being the dominant power in Afghanistan. How is this possible?

As a supporting work to answer this question, I recommend Carter Malkasian's book, *War Comes to Garmser*. This book does the best job of explaining why the Taliban were effective in governing Afghanistan and why the governments that have ruled the country since 2002 have not been effective. I recommend it to my students every year as a must-read book.

The US military never understood Afghanistan and I would argue that we never tried to at an institutional level. One of the things that makes teaching at the Command and General Staff College useful is that it represents where the army's institutional mind is focused. At no time, over the last 20 years, has there been a mandatory block of instruction in this institution on Afghanistan: its history, people, culture, etc. If we are going to invade a country, I would recommend that we ought to focus our institutional mind on understanding that country.



O'Connor, Tom, "U.S. Military Base Attacked By Suicide Bombing in Afghanistan After Soldiers Insult Muslims With Leaflets," *Newsweek* [6 September 2017]. <http://www.newsweek.com/us-military-base-attack-suicide-bomb-afghanistan-offend-muslims-660496> [accessed 11 September 2017].

O'Donnell, Lynne, "Taliban Map Out Future Vision for Afghanistan," *Foreign Policy* [8 June 2021]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/06/08/taliban-future-afghanistan-war-zabiullah-mujahid-interview/> [accessed 9 June 2021].

O'Donnell, Lynne, "The Taliban Are Winning the War of Words in Afghanistan," *Foreign Policy* [21 June 2021]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/06/21/taliban-afghanistan-war-propaganda/> [accessed 26 June 2021].

The title is inaccurate, but the article contains a critical quote.

"If we were looking at a breakdown of the war, it is 75 percent narrative and 25 percent actual conflict," a senior Afghan security official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "Their narrative is 'we have defeated the superpower,' and that is attractive to some young people."

O'Donnell, Lynne, "What a Taliban Government Will Look Like," *Foreign Policy* [23 August 2021]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/08/23/taliban-government-afghanistan/> [accessed 25 August 2021].

- ★ Osman, Borhan, "A Negotiated End to the Afghan Conflict: The Taliban's Perspective," *United States Institute of Peace* [18 June 2018]. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2018/06/negotiated-end-afghan-conflict> [accessed 12 July 2018].

Information on the thinking of average foot soldiers in the Taliban.

- ★ Osman, Borhan and Anand Gopal, "Taliban Views on a Future State," *New York University Center on International Cooperation* [July 2016]. [https://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/taliban\\_future\\_state\\_final.pdf](https://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/taliban_future_state_final.pdf) [accessed 12 July 2018].

Information on the thinking of Taliban senior leaders.

Panda, Ankit, "4 Questions After the Drone Strike That Killed Mullah Mansour," *The Diplomat* [23 May 2016]. <http://thediplomat.com/2016/05/4-questions-after-the-drone-strike-that-killed-mullah-mansour/> [accessed 23 May 2016].

Parwani, Soraya, "Is Water Scarcity a Bigger Threat Than the Taliban in Afghanistan?" *The Diplomat* [10 October 2018]. <https://thediplomat.com/2018/10/is-water-scarcity-a-bigger-threat-than-the-taliban-in-afghanistan/> [accessed 13 October 2018].

Penley, Taylor, "US Special Forces Vets Go Rogue in Middle of Night, Rescue Afghan Allies That Biden Won't," *The Western Journal* [27 August 2021]. <https://www.westernjournal.com/us-special-forces-vets-go-rogue-middle-night-rescue-afghan-allies-biden-wont/> [accessed 4 September 2021].

One story of the Pineapple Express crew in rescuing people in Afghanistan.

Peterson, Nolan, "Afghanistan: What We Left Behind," *Coffee or Die* [19 December 2021]. <https://coffeordie.com/afghanistan-what-we-left-behind/> [accessed 19 December 2021].

This is a wonderfully poetic discussion of the consequences of Afghanistan on those who did the fighting. The information isn't as valuable as are the stories of what happened to individuals and how those same individuals and others are coping.

Warning, it is rather long, but i believe it is worth the read.

I am not an Afghanistan veteran; my time was all elsewhere in the Middle East. I can only imagine that this might be useful in helping those who are veterans approach closure in their personal journey.

Thank you Nolan Peterson for writing this.

Peterson, Scott, "Afghanistan: How the Taliban won over northern ethnic minorities," *Christian Science Monitor* [20 August 2021]. <https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-South-Central/2021/0820/Afghanistan-How-the-Taliban-won-over-northern-ethnic-minorities> [accessed 5

September 2021].

Petraeus, David, "Afghanistan Did Not Have to Turn Out This Way," *The Atlantic* [8 August 2022].

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2022/08/us-withdrawal-afghanistan-strategy-shortcomings/670980/> [accessed 18 October 2022].

I was aware of this article when it was published, but I haven't read it until now. I am glad for that. I would have been too angry to have finished it two months back as I relived the events of a year prior and my frustrations with those events. I have never been a fan of General (retired) Petraeus, but I also recognize him to have been the most capable and politically savvy general that the U.S. had leading the wars in the Global War on Terrorism.

In his year after reflection, he offers three observations of American failures that resulted in the overall disastrous ending. I list them with a combination of paraphrase and rewording:

1. lack of strategic resolve
2. unwillingness to commit the resources required and to allocate properly the resources that existed
3. failure to understand the operational environment

I agree with each of these three as failures and because of how broad they are, I believe they encompass the breadth of U.S. incompetence in Afghanistan.

The problem with the statement (as that is what it is more than an article) is that General Petraeus doesn't explain how to prevent these problems from recurring in future conflict environments. Regardless of what you think about the leaders of the U.S. effort in Afghanistan, none of them was stupid. They were all intelligent people. If these intelligent people failed to do what amounts to very basic things – things that we teach majors about regularly and often at the various service staff colleges – then what hope is there that the U.S. system for fighting and managing conflict can correct it in the future?

I want to offer three suggestions as a list and hope to develop them more in some future forum.

1. Educate officers on what it means to understand the operational environment in its necessary detail. I know that the U.S. military thinks that it does this, but I would offer that we clearly don't, or we wouldn't have had so many senior leaders admit after the fact that they didn't know the Afghanistan operating environment well enough.
2. Force officers and soldiers to function in an austere training environment. Purposefully do not give soldiers, students, and leaders enough of what they need to do their jobs in the academic, training, and combat training center environments. Grade them and hold them accountable for their performance in this resource constrained environment. Make our soldiers learn, fight, and win with less. Resource constraint often leads to creative solutions. Maybe we can hack the system and force ourselves to be creative as well.
3. Provide more experience in and with foreign militaries. Most U.S. soldiers and leaders do not know other ways to do a task. They are taught and they typically only experience the U.S. way and that causes them to believe that this is not just the right way, but the only way. Obviously, such thinking is incorrect, but also reasonable and understandable. We need to break people out of their one perspective world.

I know that recommendations two and three are different and weird and would require creative and unusual approaches to provide the environments and opportunities, but I think that absent such efforts, we will not develop the creative solutions to the problems presented by General Petraeus' thoughtful statement.

Prince, Erik, "Erik Prince: Contractors, Not Troops, Will Save Afghanistan," *The New York Times* [30 August 2017]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/30/opinion/erik-prince-contractors-afghanistan.html> [accessed 31 August 2017].

- ★ Prince, Erik, "The Push to Privatize the Afghan War," *The Cipher Brief* [21 August 2018]. <https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column/private-sector/the-push-to-privatize-the-afghan-war> [accessed 23 August 2018].

I am not a fan of privatizing war for ethical reasons, however, I believe that Mr. Prince's arguments about the inflexible nature of government militaries and the poor training for those who conduct advise and assist missions are ones to ponder.

Putz, Catherine, "UN Report: Taliban Maintains Ties to Al-Qaeda," *The Diplomat* [2 June 2020]. <https://thediplomat.com/2020/06/un-report-taliban-maintains-ties-to-al-qaeda/> [accessed 3 June 2020].

Qazi, Shereena, "Mullah Omar and the art of hiding in plain sight," *Al Jazeera* [21 March 2019]. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/03/mullah-omar-art-hiding-plain-sight-qa-190319095313414.html> [accessed 22 March 2019].

- ★ Qazizai, Fazelminallah, "The Drone Unit that Helped the Taliban Win the War," *Newlines Mag* [15 September 2021]. <https://newlinesmag.com/reportage/the-drone-unit-that-helped-the-taliban-win-the-war/> [accessed 16 September 2021].

An interesting twist on how the Taliban won. This challenges the notion of the Taliban as stone age warriors which was always inaccurate. Note that ISIS was probably the most adept social media opponent that the U.S. has yet fought, and they laid claim to seventh century interpretations of sharia. It shouldn't surprise anyone that the Taliban will use and have used the most advanced equipment that they can access.

The Taliban, al-Qaeda, and ISIS are not the Amish. They have no problems with modern technology in ANY form. It should not surprise any reader of this that now and in the future any group that seeks to return to earlier interpretations of an ideology will not be limited to the technology of that same earlier period. That will hold true whether those ideologies are secular communism or religious Islamism.

Also, do not accept an argument that this was a one trick pony for success. The Taliban didn't win because they used a drone or many drones any more than ISIS was successful because they used Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. The drone was one tool in a larger toolbox. What is notable is that this is the first article of which I am aware to explain the use of this tool.

Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, "Bomb Kills At Least 11 In Western Afghanistan," *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty* [31 July 2018]. <https://www.rferl.org/a/roadside-bomb-kills-at-least-11-in-western-afghanistan/29400553.html> [accessed 2 August 2018].

Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, "U.S. General: Current Conditions 'Don't Merit' Troop Withdrawal From Afghanistan," *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty* [7 March 2019]. <https://www.rferl.org/a/u-s-general-current-conditions-don-t-merit-troop-withdrawal-from-afghanistan/29809449.html> [accessed 9 March 2019].

Rafi Sheikh, Salman, "Taliban ripping apart on regional and ethnic lines," *Asia Times* [6 September 2021]. <https://asiatimes.com/2021/09/taliban-ripping-apart-on-regional-and-ethnic-lines/> [accessed 22 September 2021].

- ★ Raghavan, Sudarsan, "'Everyone here hated the Americans': Rural Afghans live with the Taliban and a painful U.S. legacy," *The Washington Post* [5 October 2021]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/afghanistan-village-us-taliban/2021/10/04/e531303c-214a-11ec-a8d9-0827a2a4b915\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/afghanistan-village-us-taliban/2021/10/04/e531303c-214a-11ec-a8d9-0827a2a4b915_story.html) [accessed 6 October 2021].

This is a compelling refutation of the concept that the U.S. was universally loved by the average Afghan. I have written and spoken a great deal about narrative war and in that type of conflict the goal of an opposing actor is to increase the dissonance between the American story and the societal narrative. This article provides excellent support for the notion that the U.S. did a lot to generate its own dissonance and that the Taliban needed to only act upon that dissonance and then interpose its story between the American story and the Afghan people's narrative. This is what the Taliban did. Afghanistan is as powerful an example of successful narrative war as there has yet been. I thought that ISIS was the best example, but I was wrong.

It is important to acknowledge that these are things said after the Taliban are in control. Not everything should be taken as 100% honest and valid. That said, there is certainly truth in what is being said. How much, is the question.

Rezaee, Storay Karimi Jalil, "Afghanistan highway blast kills at least 35 on bus, wounds 27," *Reuters* [31

July 2019]. <https://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKCN1UQ0JD> [accessed 1 August 2019].

Rempfer, Kyle, "How the US dropped more munitions in Afghanistan this year than it has since the height of the war," *Military Times* [26 April 2018].

<https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2018/04/26/how-the-us-dropped-more-munitions-in-afghanistan-this-year-than-it-has-since-the-height-of-the-war/> [accessed 27 April 2018].

Rempfer, Kyle, "As the Afghan air force's strike assets grow, so too do civilian casualties," *Air Force Times* [6 August 2018]. <https://www.airforcetimes.com/news/your-air-force/2018/08/06/as-the-afghan-air-forces-strike-assets-grow-so-too-do-civilian-casualties/> [accessed 7 August 2018].

Rempfer, Kyle, "SIGAR: Drug lab bombing was a dead end, and most metrics for success or failure in Afghanistan are 'classified or nonexistent'," *Military Times* [24 April 2019].

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2019/04/24/sigar-drug-lab-bombing-was-a-dead-end-and-most-metrics-for-success-or-failure-in-afghanistan-are-classified-or-nonexistent/> [accessed 1 May 2019].

Rempfer, Kyle, "Ghazni City update: Here's what Green Berets, 1st SFAB and Apaches are doing to help," *Military Times* [6 August 2018]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-air-force/2018/08/14/ghazni-city-update-heres-what-green-berets-1st-sfab-and-apaches-are-doing-to-help/> [accessed 15 August 2018].

- ★ Rempfer, Kyle, "The Taliban's leader lived in walking distance of this US forward operating base, new book alleges," *Military Times* [11 March 2019]. <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2019/03/11/the-talibans-leader-lived-in-walking-distance-of-this-us-forward-operating-base/> [accessed 12 March 2019].

Great example of the fact that the US does not know what it is doing, where it should be looking, or how it needs to win.

Retter, Emily, "Ex-Para's horror as Taliban slaughter 7,000 people in Afghanistan's Helmand province," *Mirror* [7 April 2016]. <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/ex-paras-horror-taliban-slaughter-7711216> [accessed 8 April 2016].

Reuters, "In Parched Afghanistan, Drought Sharpens Water Dispute with Iran," *Voice of America News* [17 July 2018]. <https://www.voanews.com/a/afghan-iran-water/4485805.html> [accessed 17 July 2018].

Reuters, "Taliban claim bomb attack on Afghan police; 14 killed, 145 hurt," *Reuters* [7 August 2019]. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-blast/taliban-claim-bomb-attack-on-police-in-afghanistan-nearly-100-wounded-idUSKCN1UX0DF> [accessed 7 August 2019].

Reuters, "27 local peace activists abducted in western Afghanistan," *Reuters* [25 December 2019]. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanitan-kidnapping/27-local-peace-activists-abducted-in-western-afghanistan-idUSKBN1YT0FB> [accessed 27 December 2019].

Roggio, Bill, "Jihad during Ramadan is 'obligatory,' Taliban spokesman says," *Long War Journal* [30 May 2017]. <http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/05/jihad-during-ramadan-is-obligatory-taliban-spokesman-says.php> [accessed 31 May 2017].

Roggio, Bill, "Taliban overruns Afghan district, kills governor," *Long War Journal* [12 April 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/04/taliban-overruns-afghan-district-kills-governor.php> [accessed 13 April 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "Taliban forces hundreds of schools in Kunduz to close," *Long War Journal* [19 April 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/04/taliban-forces-hundreds-of-schools-in-kunduz-to-close.php> [accessed 20 April 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "Mattis claims Taliban 'cannot win at the ballot box'," *Long War Journal* [1 May 2018].

<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/05/mattis-claims-taliban-cannot-win-at-the-ballot-box.php> [accessed 2 May 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "Taliban claims it seizes 2 Afghan districts," *Long War Journal* [16 May 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/05/taliban-claims-it-seizes-2-afghan-districts.php> [accessed 17 May 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "US military kills 'dual-hatted' AQIS leader in eastern Afghanistan," *Long War Journal* [16 May 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/05/us-military-kills-dual-hatted-aqis-leader-in-eastern-afghanistan.php> [accessed 17 May 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "Afghan military identifies 7 provincial capitals 'under pressure'," *Long War Journal* [17 May 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/05/afghan-military-identifies-7-provincial-capitals-under-pressure.php> [accessed 18 May 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "Taliban overruns second district in Ghazni," *Long War Journal* [20 May 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/05/taliban-overruns-second-district-in-ghazni.php> [accessed 21 May 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "Taliban captures more than 70 Afghan police in attack near the capital," *Long War Journal* [24 June 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/06/taliban-captures-more-than-70-afghan-police-in-attack-near-the-capital.php> [accessed 25 June 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "Taliban: We're 'another name of the Afghan nation'," *Long War Journal* [26 June 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/06/taliban-were-another-name-of-the-afghan-nation.php> [accessed 29 June 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "Analysis: Pentagon continues to underestimate al Qaeda, downplay ties to Taliban," *Long War Journal* [5 July 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/07/analysis-pentagon-continues-to-underestimate-al-qaeda-downplay-ties-to-taliban.php> [accessed 9 July 2018].

Bill Roggio reminds us that we do not really understand the al-Qaeda-Taliban arrangement and cooperation. If, after seventeen years of fighting, we do not understand this, what makes us think that we understand the attachment and attraction for ISIS and other groups?

This article is in response to the June 2018 DoD report titled Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan.

Roggio, Bill, "Taliban overruns 2 districts in eastern Afghanistan," *Long War Journal* [24 July 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/07/taliban-overruns-2-districts-in-eastern-afghanistan.php> [accessed 25 July 2018].

Roggio, Bill, "Taliban says Islamic State has been 'completely defeated' in Jawzjan," *Long War Journal* [1 August 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/08/taliban-says-islamic-state-is-completely-defeated-in-jawzjan.php> [accessed 2 August 2018].

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Great comments on this report by one of the true subject matter experts.

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- ★ Roggio, Bill, "Analysis: Gen. Nicholson says US strategy in Afghanistan 'is working,' despite the facts," *Long War Journal* [23 August 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/08/analysis-gen-nicholson-says-us-strategy-in-afghanistan-is-working-despite-the-facts.php> [accessed 24 August 2018].

Bill Roggio is one of the best-informed reporters and commentators on the Global War on Terrorism. This



piece is another example of his command of the facts. He challenges statements made by the commander of Operation Resolute Support's briefing of 22 August 2018. It is unclear whether or not the military is providing an open and honest assessment or displaying a positive can-do attitude for public consumption.

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Roggio, Bill, "Taliban calls Afghan government 'impotent,' says negotiating with it is 'a waste of time'," *Long War Journal* [28 November 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/11/taliban-calls-afghan-government-impotent-says-negotiating-with-it-is-a-waste-of-time.php> [accessed 29 November 2018].

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Roggio, Bill, "Taliban squeezes Afghan government by seizing key border towns," *Long War Journal* [9 July 2021]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2021/07/taliban-squeezes-afghan-government-by-seizing-key-border-towns.php> [accessed 19 July 2021].

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Roggio, Bill and Alexandra Gutowski, "LWJ Map Assessment: Taliban controls or contests 45% of Afghan districts," *Long War Journal* [26 September 2017]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/09/lwj-map-assessment-taliban-controls-or-contests-45-of-afghan-districts.php> [accessed 27 September 2017].

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Rogin, Josh, "Pakistan wants to be treated like an ally, not a scapegoat," *The Washington Post* [25 August 2021]. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/08/25/pakistan-wants-be-treated-like-an-ally-not-scapegoat/> [accessed 25 August 2021].

★ Rosenberg, Matthew and Joseph Goldstein, "U.S. Role in Afghanistan Turns to Combat Again, With a Tragic Error," *New York Times* [8 May 2016]. [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/09/world/asia/afghanistan-taliban-kunduz-doctors-without-borders-airstrike.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/09/world/asia/afghanistan-taliban-kunduz-doctors-without-borders-airstrike.html?_r=0) [accessed 9 May 2016].

★ Rubin, Barnett, "The Once and Future Defeat in Afghanistan," *War on the Rocks* [1 November 2021]. <https://warontherocks.com/2021/11/the-once-and-future-defeat-in-afghanistan/> [accessed 4

November 2021].

I recommend the article even if I don't like its tone very much. My dislike is derived in part, because the author was a key government person who doesn't accept responsibility for any of the problems with U.S. policy and actions in Afghanistan. That said, the article provides some depressing insight into the decisions made during the U.S. involvement. Most of this insight is also provided in other articles and books, but because the author has firsthand knowledge of conversations, he offers some significant corroboration to the assertions made in the other articles.

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Ryan, Missy, "In Afghanistan, U.S. military sprints to prove it can reverse insurgent tide," *The Washington Post* [30 March 2018]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/in-afghanistan-us-military-sprints-to-prove-it-can-reverse-insurgent-tide/2018/03/30/aebb5718-2f0d-11e8-8688-e053ba58f1e4\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/in-afghanistan-us-military-sprints-to-prove-it-can-reverse-insurgent-tide/2018/03/30/aebb5718-2f0d-11e8-8688-e053ba58f1e4_story.html) [accessed 2 April 2018].

Ryan, Missy, "For most of Afghanistan war, U.S. 'never really fought to win,' Trump declares," *The Washington Post* [18 March 2020]. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/for-most-of-afghanistan-war-america-never-really-fought-to-win-trump-declares/2020/05/18/9ab85afa-992c-11ea-b60c-3be060a4f8e1\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/for-most-of-afghanistan-war-america-never-really-fought-to-win-trump-declares/2020/05/18/9ab85afa-992c-11ea-b60c-3be060a4f8e1_story.html) [accessed 20 May 2020].

It is unfortunate how politicized everything is. The idea that the US military has not been fighting to win for some time in Afghanistan shouldn't be a political statement. It is true.

It is also unfortunately necessary for me to say that this assertion is not intended to denigrate the personal and familial sacrifices of hundreds of thousands of military and contractor personnel.

What does it take to fight to win? It means that the organization is willing to do what it takes to win. That may mean changing how it rotates units or how it partners or how it does any of the hundreds or thousands of tasks essential to modern conflict. For example, the US military never seriously contemplated leaving units in theater until winning was accomplished.

Think about how much adaptation would have happened if that was the decision. Junior leaders would have found a way. That is part of what it means to fight to win.

Conflict is not a rotational business. It is a business of adaptation. That adaptation comes from friction between opposing parties.

★ Sadat, Sami, "I Commanded Afghan Troops This Year. We Were Betrayed." *The New York Times* [25 August 2021]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/25/opinion/afghanistan-taliban-army.html> [accessed 4 September 2021].

Simply stated, this is the best explanation of what happened to the Afghan National Army. It is a little late to the discussion and many of you may have already seen or read it. If you have, read it again. This is profound.

What many don't seem to understand is the meaning of a tipping point with respect to human will or commitment. Human beings will do and endure incredible things. I tell my students that there is no environment that a human cannot endure. We regularly underestimate human resilience. However, one must understand that human resilience is directly connected to necessity. If it isn't a requirement then humans won't endure as much as we expect. Under an environment of suffering by choice it becomes an exercise in understanding what will break human resolve.

I have previously and will again recommend Jim Willbanks' book, *Abandoning Vietnam*, as an analog for what we have witnessed over the last twelve to eighteen months in Afghanistan. The contention made by Willbanks was that the U.S. failed South Vietnam by negotiating a deal that involved the withdrawal of U.S. forces without a similar withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces from South Vietnam. Secondly, the U.S. made the mistake of making the South Vietnamese military look like the U.S. military which meant that it needed to be logistically supported like the U.S. military which South Vietnam was not independently capable of doing.

Both of these problems were also present in Afghanistan. An additional point that comes out in this opinion

piece is the emphasis on the importance of U.S. contractors for the success of the Afghan National Army. There were 5 to 7 times as many U.S. contractors in Afghanistan as there were combat forces at the end and those contractors were 5 to 7 times more important for the Afghan National Army to fight independent of U.S. combat power, but without U.S. combat power those contractors could not and would not remain.

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Schogol, Jeff, "The Pentagon Is Shifting US Combat Power From Iraq to Afghanistan — Again," *Task and Purpose* [5 February 2018]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/us-combat-power-iraq-afghanistan/> [accessed 8 February 2018].

Schogol, Jeff, "The predictable collapse of the Afghan Air Force is happening in real time," *Task and Purpose* [28 July 2021]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/analysis/afghan-air-force-collapse/> [accessed 30 July 2021].

Schogol, Jeff, "Everything America did wrong in Afghanistan, according to the top US government watchdog," *Task and Purpose* [29 July 2021]. <https://taskandpurpose.com/news/afghanistan-reconstruction-failures-special-inspector-general/> [accessed 30 July 2021].

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- ★ Sediqi, Abdul Qadir and Rupam Jain, "Taliban fighters double as reporters to wage Afghan digital war," *Reuters* [10 May 2019]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2019/05/al-qaeda-video-emphasizes-unity-with-talibans-islamic-emirate.php> [accessed 13 May 2019].

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- ★ Shah, Aqil, "How Will the Taliban Deal With Other Islamic Extremist Groups?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* [31 August 2021]. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/08/31/how-will-taliban-deal-with-other-islamic-extremist-groups-pub-85239> [accessed 4 September 2021].

This is the best summary of the "extremist" players in Afghanistan so far.

I would refer everyone to the battle for Stalingrad in WWII as a possible useful comparison. When reserves showed up, the Soviets opted to attack the surrounding German units rather than the Germans in Stalingrad.

The idea being to separate the German Sixth Army from any possible relief.

With extremist groups, they likewise attack those most closely sharing their ideology to create separation between themselves and their ultimate opponents. In this case, the Taliban want to present the West with the option of either supporting it or supporting ISIS knowing that the West will choose the Taliban given those options.

ISIS, on the other hand, wants to attack and discredit anyone else's bone fides as purely Islam and by so doing offer fighters and the population a choice between Islam and corruption.

This brief article lays out well the available options over which this ideological competition exists.

Thank you Paul Cobaugh for sharing it.

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[29 July 2019]. <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2019/07/29/us-troops-want-keep-deploying-afghanistan-enlisted-leaders-say.html> [accessed 30 July 2019].

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This is a fascinating story about the location of Mullah Omar in Afghanistan until his death during the US occupation. The points the story emphasizes include the following:

- Mullah Omar never left the area
- The local and simple people supported him throughout the occupation
- The locals rejected American occupation



Stavridis, James, "Baby Powder Is the Secret Weapon in the Afghanistan War," *Bloomberg* [21 June 2018]. <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2018-06-21/baby-powder-can-end-the-war-in-afghaistan> [accessed 25 June 2018].

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The article is part of a series that discusses the final months of the Trump presidency following the election and leading to the inauguration. The focus of this episode is on Trump's desire to withdraw the US military from multiple locations globally and the efforts exerted by senior military and civilian members of the Department of Defense to prevent that effort.

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Thomas, Clayton, "Afghanistan: Background and U.S. Policy: In Brief," *Congressional Research Service* [updated 1 November 2018]. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45122> [accessed 12 November 2018].

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This assessment gives an interesting take on the events in Iraq following the US withdrawal from the country.

United States Government. Warlord, Inc.: Extortion and Corruption Along the U.S. Supply Chain in Afghanistan. Report of the Majority Staff Rep. John F. Tierney, Chair, Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee on Oversight and Government Reform U.S. House of Representatives, June 2010. [http://www.cbsnews.com/htdocs/pdf/HNT\\_Report.pdf](http://www.cbsnews.com/htdocs/pdf/HNT_Report.pdf) [accessed 16 August 2016].

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This is not stunning, but it is sad, and it communicates what was possible with actual leadership from political and military leaders vis-à-vis the American people.

Walt, Stephen M. "It Still Doesn't Get Worse Than Afghanistan," *Foreign Policy* [9 July 2018]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/07/09/it-still-doesnt-get-worse-than-afghanistan/> [accessed 19 July 2018].

- ★ Walt, Stephen M. "How Not to Leave Afghanistan," *Foreign Policy* [23 February 2021].  
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The United States Institute for Peace Afghanistan Study Group released its recent Congressionally mandated report on what to do about Afghanistan with respect to a looming 1 May 2021 departure date. The report is interesting for the obvious recommendations beginning with having a strategy. Stephen Walt writes an excellent summation of the problems with the report. There are no recommendations from Walt to fix the report. His primary recommendation is to leave Afghanistan. Given the realities of twenty years of failure and continued American institutional ignorance with respect to the complexities of Afghanistan, I agree.

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In narrative war we have seen things turn very rapidly. It is the nature of narrative war that once the conditions are set then it is possible for a weak power to suddenly be on top as we saw in 2014 in Syria and Iraq and in 1996 and 2021 in Afghanistan. This article expresses perceptions that can cause such a flip in relationships. I will address more about Afghanistan as an example of narrative war in action in an upcoming blog post, but for now I ask that you consider this as a critical moment in the story that is being created – American incompetence.

For those who have said that we need to avoid rapid judgments, I agree with you. My point isn't to say that the sky is falling, but to say that this is how the sky falls and that we have to be very careful to keep the sky from actually falling.

I hope that that made sense.

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You need to read this. This is a long article with more than 6,000 words. The subtitle is not shocking. Almost everyone I know with any knowledge of Afghanistan knew that the rosy assessments and predictions were completely fabricated. The notion that this is another *Pentagon Papers* is absolute garbage. There is nothing new here, however, this is a solid summary of the falsehoods and misperceptions about what was (and is) happening in Afghanistan.

I suggest that this article is as much an indictment of the Congress and the media as it is of the military senior

leadership. This does indict the military senior civilians and generals, but where were those responsible for oversight and where were the reporters? Why didn't they go to Afghanistan, see for themselves, and ask hard questions?

I fear that this article exposes the fundamental flaw of an all-volunteer military. The nation leaves it to "the professionals" to deal with the problem and no one else bothers. No one else is qualified to question "the professionals" and "the professionals" are not really qualified to build a nation they don't understand. Before we can fix Afghanistan, we need to fix this problem.

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Zucchino, David, "Fears Rise About Safety of Afghan Airport as U.S. Warns Americans to Stay Away," *The New York Times* [21 August 2021]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/21/world/asia/Afghanistan-Kabul-airport-evacuations.html> [accessed 25 August 2021].

## Operation Iraqi Freedom

Helfont, Samuel. *Compulsion in Religion: Saddam Hussein, Islam, and the Roots of Insurgencies in Iraq*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

An excellent source for insight into Iraq pre-2003. Saddam Hussein ruled Iraq by controlling the narrative space. Specifically, he controlled religious instruction and discourse through decades of manipulation, coercion, and intimidation. Failure to understand the effort required to control the religious landscape ensured ignorant decisions by occupying powers. It is also fair to suggest that even if US administrators had understood, the very fabric of the US civil-religious discourse would have prevented any American-led occupation from controlling the explosion of religious sectarianism with the necessary force.

Hooker, Richard D. Jr. and Joseph J. Collins, editors. 2015. *Lessons Encountered: Learning from the Long War*. Washington DC: National Defense University Press, September 2015.

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Ackerman, Elliott, "A Battle in Falluja, Revisited: Official documents can never tell us the whole story of war." *The New York Times* [25 May 2019].

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/25/opinion/memorial-day-falluja.html> [accessed 28 May 2019].

★ Antoon, Sinan, "Living With Death in Baghdad," *The New York Times* [20 July 2016].

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An interesting think piece and good reporting that can lead a reader to consider the responsibility of actions in war and the gradations of behaviors regardless of severity, but including issues of life and death. Who is to blame the midlevel commander or the senior leader?

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As one who went through these times in Baghdad and watched the process develop this article captures some of the truths of the decisions and actions taken. It completely misses the lack of energy on the part of the administration to actually influence the Iraqi government. It also fails to address the institutional weakness of the department of State regarding planning which was, in part, a reason for the escalated cost estimates.

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Samuel Helfont has written some of the most interesting scholarship on the Saddam Hussein regime and he is worth reading and considering regardless of whether or not you agree with him. In fact, if you do disagree with him, all the better to ponder over his thinking. I happen to agree with him in this article and I strongly recommend it for consideration.

The challenge of the current highly politicized environment is that we rarely have a mature discussion or debate and that single interpretations are very quickly accepted as truth and reality regardless of contradictory evidence. In this article, Helfont provides challenges to more than one widely held interpretation of the invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq.

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- ★ Malkasian, Carter, "Anbar's Illusions: The Failure of Iraq's Success Story," *Foreign Affairs* [24 June 2017]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iraq/2017-06-24/anbars-illusions> [accessed 26 June 2017].

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The final topline is available at this location. This provides excellent coverage over time of US perspectives on the Iraq War. [http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2018/03/16161318/03-19-18\\_Iraq\\_topleveline\\_for\\_release.pdf](http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2018/03/16161318/03-19-18_Iraq_topleveline_for_release.pdf) [accessed 20 March 2018].

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## Islam

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## Islamist Ideology

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[https://www.academia.edu/32164182/Jihadi Salafism in Jordan and the Syrian Conflict Divisions Overcome Unity 2018](https://www.academia.edu/32164182/Jihadi_Salafism_in_Jordan_and_the_Syrian_Conflict_Divisions_Overcome_Unity_2018) [accessed 23 June 2022].

Wiktorowicz, Quintan, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Volume 29, Issue 3, 207-239 [1 May 2006]. [http://pc8ga3qq6a.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2004&ctx\\_enc=info%3Aofi%2Fenc%3AUTF-8&rft\\_id=info%3Aasid%2Fsummon.serialssolutions.com&rft\\_val\\_fmt=info%3Aofi%2Ffmt%3Akev%3Amtx%3Ajournal&rft.genre=article&rft.atitle=Anatomy+of+the+Salafi+Movement&rft.jtitle=Studies+in+Conflict+%26+Terrorism&rft.au=Wiktorowicz%2C+Quintan&rft.date=2006-05-01&rft.issn=1057-610X&rft.eissn=1521-0731&rft.volume=29&rft.issue=3&rft.spage=207&rft.epage=239&rft\\_id=info:doi/10.1080%2F10576100500497004&rft.externalDBID=n%2Fa&rft.externalDocID=10\\_1080\\_10576100500497004&param\\_dict=en-US](http://pc8ga3qq6a.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2004&ctx_enc=info%3Aofi%2Fenc%3AUTF-8&rft_id=info%3Aasid%2Fsummon.serialssolutions.com&rft_val_fmt=info%3Aofi%2Ffmt%3Akev%3Amtx%3Ajournal&rft.genre=article&rft.atitle=Anatomy+of+the+Salafi+Movement&rft.jtitle=Studies+in+Conflict+%26+Terrorism&rft.au=Wiktorowicz%2C+Quintan&rft.date=2006-05-01&rft.issn=1057-610X&rft.eissn=1521-0731&rft.volume=29&rft.issue=3&rft.spage=207&rft.epage=239&rft_id=info:doi/10.1080%2F10576100500497004&rft.externalDBID=n%2Fa&rft.externalDocID=10_1080_10576100500497004&param_dict=en-US) [accessed 6 April 2017].

Williams, Jennifer, "The Saudi Arabia problem: why a country at war with jihadists also fuels them", *Vox* [1 December 2015]. <http://www.vox.com/2015/12/1/9821466/saudi-problem-isis> [accessed 2 December 2015].

This article includes some history on Wahhabism and on the connection between the Saudi ruling family and the Wahhabi clerics. It doesn't give the full or correct story and therefore leads toward interpretations that are not complete.

★ Wright, Robin, et al. "The Jihadi Threat: ISIS, al-Qaeda, and Beyond," United States Institute of Peace, December 2016/January 2017. <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/The-Jihadi-Threat-ISIS-Al-Qaeda-and-Beyond.pdf> [accessed 22 February 2017].

A great summary of where the jihadi threat came from and where it has gone and where it may be going. For the size of the document, this is a must read for understanding the present and possible futures of ISIS and al-Qaeda.

## Violent Extremist Ideologies

Azinović, Vlado, ed. *Between Salvation and Terror: Radicalization and the Foreign Fighter Phenomenon in the Western Balkans*. Sarajevo: The Atlantic Initiative, 2017.

[https://www.academia.edu/36005598/The\\_Foreign\\_Fighter\\_Phenomenon\\_in\\_Kosovo\\_Covering\\_a\\_Blind\\_Spot](https://www.academia.edu/36005598/The_Foreign_Fighter_Phenomenon_in_Kosovo_Covering_a_Blind_Spot) [accessed 13 February 2021].

Meleagrou-Hitchens, Alexander, Seamus Hughes, and Bennett Clifford. *The Travelers: American Jihadists in Syria and Iraq*. The George Washington University Program on Extremism, February 2018.

<https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/extremism.gwu.edu/files/TravelersAmericanJihadistsinSyriaandIraq.pdf> [accessed 27 February 2018].

Pandalai, Shruti, editor. 2019. *Combating Terrorism: Evolving Asian Perspectives*. New Delhi: Pentagon Press LLP. [https://idsa.in/system/files/book/book\\_combating-terrorism.pdf](https://idsa.in/system/files/book/book_combating-terrorism.pdf) [accessed 18 January 2020].

- ★ Vidino, Lorenzo, Francesco Marone, and Eva Entenmann. *Fear Thy Neighbor Radicalization and Jihadist Attacks in the West*. Milan: Ledizioni LediPublishing, 2017.

<https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/extremism.gwu.edu/files/FearThyNeighbor%20RadicalizationandJihadistAttacksintheWest.pdf> [accessed 10 July 2017].

This book length project (over 100 pages) provides significant information on the attacks that have occurred in Europe and North America perpetrated by Islamic extremists. The document includes good background and statistical information on the variety of attacks from June 2014 to June 2017.

Ackerman, Gary A. ““Designing Danger”: Complex Engineering by Violent Non-State Actors: Introduction to the Special Issue,” *Journal of Strategic Security*, Article 3 of Volume 9, Number 1 Designing Danger: Complex Engineering by Violent Non-State Actors [14 March 2016].

<http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1502&context=jss> [accessed 18 April 2016].

Alvaredo, Facundo and Thomas Piketty, “Measuring Top Incomes and Inequality in the Middle East: Data Limitations and Illustration with the Case of Egypt”, *Economic Research Forum* (Working Paper No. 8320, May 2014. <http://piketty.pse.ens.fr/files/AlvaredoPiketty2014ERF.pdf> [accessed 1 December 2015].

Piketty is known for his advocacy for economic solutions to problems with extremism. Here are some quotes from the abstract. “We come with two main conclusions. First, data sources at the national level are insufficient to derive reliable estimates of top income shares in a country like Egypt (or in other Middle East countries). One would need reliable fiscal sources in order to make a precise comparison with other emerging or developed countries.... Next, and irrespective of these uncertainties on within-country inequalities, there is no doubt that income inequality is extremely large at the level of the Middle East taken as whole – simply because regional inequality in per capita GNP is particularly large.... Popular discontent might reflect the fact that perceptions about inequality and the (un)fairness of the distribution are determined by regional (and/or global) inequality, and not only on national inequality.”

American University School of Public Affairs, “Foreign Fighter Returnees: An Indefinite Threat?”

American University School of Public Affairs [28 September 2018].

<https://www.american.edu/spa/news/malet-foreign-fighters.cfm> [accessed 11 October 2018].

Argentino, Marc-André, Shiraz Maher, and Charlie Winter, “Violent Extremist Innovation: A Cross-Ideological Analysis,” *International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation*, King’s College, London [December 2021]. <https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/ICSR-Report-Violent-Extremist-Innovation-A-Cross%E2%80%9991Ideological-Analysis.pdf> [accessed 24 February 2022].

Asal, Victor, R. Karl Rethemeyer, and Joseph Young: *An Analysis of Violent Nonstate Actor Organizational*

*Lethality and Network Co-Evolution in the Middle East and North Africa*. College Park, MD: START, 2016.

The executive summary includes the following findings:

- VNSAs are more likely to kill many civilians in one year when they control territory and when governments use violence, or what we call a stick strategy, against them;
- VNSAs are most likely to kill many civilians in one year when governments use a mixed strategy – that is, a combination of violence (stick) and negotiation (what we term a carrot strategy) as opposed to either stick or carrot alone;
- VNSAs are most likely to inflict more than 100 battle deaths in one year when they control territory, are highly connected to other VNSAs, and are large (though there is a strong relationship between size and controlling territory);
- VNSAs are less likely to inflict more than 100 battle deaths in one year when they have a formal political party.
- VNSAs that are socially isolated – that is, have no alliance connections – tend to be less lethal and tend to stay relatively less lethal;
- Social isolation is a relatively stable state; however, there are factors that help to drive organization alliance formation like shared location, ideology, and preference for closed relationship – a friend of friend tends also to be a friend;
- Once an organization generates alliance connections, a feedback loop drives lethality up;
- Maintaining organizational isolation appears to be a useful strategy for dampening organizational lethality from the abstract. “We come with two main conclusions.

Reviewing these findings which are derived from statistically available information from 1998-2012 one can see why a group like ISIS would be expected to be violent and even excessively so.

Atran, Scott, Robert Axelrod, Richard Davis, and Baruch Fischhoff, “Challenges in researching terrorism from the field: Research must focus on how youth are engaged,” *Science*, Vol. 355, Issue 6323, 352-354 [27 Jan 2017]. <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/355/6323/352/tab-pdf> [accessed 1 February 2017].

Benmelech, Efraim and Esteban F. Kor. What Explains the Flow of Foreign Fighters to ISIS? National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, April 2016. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w22190> [accessed 11 August 2016].

Quoted from Abstract: This paper provides the first systematic analysis of the link between economic, political, and social conditions and the global phenomenon of ISIS foreign fighters. We find that poor economic conditions do not drive participation in ISIS... Other factors that explain the number of ISIS foreign fighters are the size of a country's Muslim population and its ethnic homogeneity... [O]ur results suggest that the flow of foreign fighters to ISIS is driven not by economic or political conditions but rather by ideology and the difficulty of assimilation into homogeneous Western countries.

Bjelopera, Jerome P. “Domestic Terrorism: An Overview,” Congressional Research Service [21 August 2017]. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/R44921.pdf> [accessed 2 July 2018].

Intended as a primer on the topic of domestic terrorism which, by the author's explanation, is not terrorist acts motivated by foreign sources. Excellent material in the discussion on the topic.

Blair, Christopher, Erica Chenoweth, Michael C. Horowitz, Evan Perkoski, and Philip B. K. Potter, “The Death and Life of Terrorist Networks: How Alliances Help Militants Survive,” *Foreign Affairs* [5 October 2020]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2020-10-05/death-and-life-terrorist-networks> [accessed 21 October 2020].

Braniff, William. Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee Hearing “What is the State of Islamic Extremism: Key Trends, Challenges and Implications for U.S. Policy,” 13 February 2015.

William Braniff is the Executive Director for the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland. In this testimony he speaks of the changes from his

previous testimony 53 weeks earlier. This testimony includes some good charts and statistical data. He makes statements as he does in the "Two Caliphates" document referenced above. He is wrong in his use of the term attrition with respect to strategy. He need to adopt Delbruck's use of the term exhaustion to be more accurate.

- ★ Celso, Anthony, "The Radicalization of Sunni Jihadist Groups and Their Development of a Total War Doctrine," *Journal of Liberal Arts and Humanities* (JLAH), Issue: Vol. 1; No. 1 January 2020, 1-19. [https://www.academia.edu/41804617/THE\\_RADICALIZATION\\_OF\\_SUNNI\\_JIHADIST\\_GROUPS\\_AND\\_THEIR\\_DEVELOPMENT\\_OF\\_A\\_TOTAL\\_WAR\\_DOCTRINE](https://www.academia.edu/41804617/THE_RADICALIZATION_OF_SUNNI_JIHADIST_GROUPS_AND_THEIR_DEVELOPMENT_OF_A_TOTAL_WAR_DOCTRINE) [accessed 11 June 2020].

Strongly recommend reading this. I am very impressed with the comprehensive nature of this discussion on the evolution of thought amongst current extremist groups. This is being added to my list of must reads as it is that useful.

Clarke, Colin P. "How Terrorist Groups Learn: Implications for al-Qaeda," *Foreign Policy Research Institute* [13 March 2019]. <https://www.fpri.org/article/2019/03/how-terrorist-groups-learn-implications-for-al-qaeda/> [accessed 14 March 2019].

Simple, but useful discussion of how terrorist groups learn.

Cragin, R. Kim, "Resisting Violent Extremism: A Conceptual Model for Non-Radicalization, Terrorism and Political Violence, 26:2, 337-353, DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2012.714820.

- ★ Crowell, Mandy, "What Went Wrong With France's Deradicalization Program?" *Defense One* [29 September 2017]. <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2017/09/what-went-wrong-frances-deradicalization-program/141356/> [accessed 2 October 2017].

Can a secular nation "deradicalize" those who have committed themselves to a path of religious extremism? This article looks at a French attempt to accomplish such an effort. The program ended, but the report suggests there may have been progress. One of the primary characters in this narrative "deprogrammed" himself while in prison and reading material from the *Enlightenment*. The questions raised by this article are serious and need consideration and deep thought.

Darden, Jessica Trisko and Izabela Steflija, "When Women Commit War Crimes," *War on the Rocks* [28 October 2020]. <https://warontherocks.com/2020/10/when-women-commit-war-crimes/> [accessed 24 November 2020].

De Dreu, Carsten K. W. and Mariska E. Kret, "Oxytocin Conditions Intergroup Relations Through Upregulated In-Group Empathy, Cooperation, Conformity, and Defense," *Biological Psychiatry*, 2015, 79, 165-173. <http://www.mariskakret.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/De-Dreu-Kret-Manuscript.pdf> [accessed 30 July 2020].

Oxytocin provides added benefit to in-group behavior.

Fernholz, Tim, "It's not the poverty in the Middle East that's driving terrorism—it's the politics", *Quartz* [30 November 2015]. <http://qz.com/561848/its-not-the-poverty-in-the-middle-east-thats-driving-terrorism-its-the-politics/> [accessed 1 December 2015].

This is an interesting discussion and refutation of a standard line that poverty is linked to extremist violence. The statistical proof is all in opposition.

Florida, Richard, "Why So Many Foreign Fighters Flock to ISIS," *Defense One* [10 August 2016]. <http://qz.com/561848/its-not-the-poverty-in-the-middle-east-thats-driving-terrorism-its-the-politics/> [accessed 1 December 2015].

This is a summary and discussion of the Benmelech and Kor paper identified above.

Fainberg, Alisa and Eitan Azani, "Central Asia Jihadism: Home and Abroad," *International Institute for Counter-Terrorism*, Herzliya, Israel [October 2017]. [https://www.academia.edu/35271970/Central\\_Asia\\_Jihadism\\_Home\\_and\\_Abroad](https://www.academia.edu/35271970/Central_Asia_Jihadism_Home_and_Abroad) [accessed 15 December 2019].

- ★ Gall, Carlotta, "How Kosovo Was Turned Into Fertile Ground for ISIS," *New York Times* [21 May 2016]. [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/22/world/europe/how-the-saudis-turned-kosovo-into-fertile-ground-for-isis.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/22/world/europe/how-the-saudis-turned-kosovo-into-fertile-ground-for-isis.html?_r=1) [accessed 23 May 2016].
- Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed, Jason Fritz, Bridget Moreng, and Nathaniel Barr, "The War between the Islamic State and al-Qaeda: Strategic Dimensions of a Patricidal Conflict," Valens Global: International Strategies & Security, SMA Support to SOCCENT [September 2015].
- ★ Gartenstein-Ross, Daveed, Colin P. Clarke, and Matt Shear, "Terrorists and Technological Innovation," *Lawfare* [2 February 2020]. <https://www.lawfareblog.com/terrorists-and-technological-innovation> [accessed 19 February 2020].  
This is an excellent article that highlights the methods used by non-state actors to implement new technologies into their operational approach.
- Gilliam, Joshua. "Why They Hate Us: An Examination of al-wala' wa-l-bara' in Salafi-Jihadist Ideology." *Military Review* online edition, February 2018. <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/Army-Press-Online-Journal/documents/Gilliam-Hate-v2.pdf> [accessed 20 January 2019].
- Glazzard, Andrew, Sasha Jespersen, Thomas Maguire, and Emily Winterbotham, "Islamist Violent Extremism: A New Form of Conflict or Business as Usual?" *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, 6(1): 13, pp. 1–19 [28 September 2017]. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.5334/sta.503> [accessed 21 October 2020].
- The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, "The nexus of conflict and illicit drug trafficking: Syria and the Wider Region," Geneva: Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime [November 2016]. [http://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/global-initiative-the-nexus-of-conflict-and-illicit-drug-trafficking-syria-and-the-wider-region-november-2016\\_low.pdf](http://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/global-initiative-the-nexus-of-conflict-and-illicit-drug-trafficking-syria-and-the-wider-region-november-2016_low.pdf) [accessed 19 June 2018].
- ★ Habeck, Mary R., Ph.D., "Jihadist Strategies in the War on Terrorism," *Heritage Lectures: Published by the Heritage Foundation*, no. 855 [8 November 2015]. <http://www.heritage.org/research/lecture/jihadist-strategies-in-the-war-on-terrorism> [accessed 21 March 2016].
- Hale, Virginia, "Study: Muslim Parents Would Keep Quiet About Jihadi Children," *Breitbart* [11 July 2016]. <http://www.breitbart.com/london/2016/07/11/muslim-parents-jihadi-children/> [accessed 11 July 2016].  
Interesting information on the concern regarding the problems facing those who fight violent extremism. This challenges the notion of responsibility versus persecution.
- Hamming, Tore Refslund, "Jihadi Competition and Political Preferences," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Volume 11, Issue 6, December 2017, 63-88. <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/657/pdf> [accessed 27 April 2018].
- Hassan, Hassan, "The twisted book club: how terrorist groups like ISIS use reading lists to teach their ideology," *The National* [16 May 2018]. <https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/comment/the-twisted-book-club-how-terrorist-groups-like-isis-use-reading-lists-to-teach-their-ideology-1.7309330> [accessed 24 May 2018].
- Hassan, Hassan, "Stuck Fighting the Last War," *The Atlantic* [11 September 2018]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/09/stuck-fighting-the-last-war/569713/> [accessed 12 September 2018].
- Hauch, Lars, "Interview with an Iranian fighter in Hayat Tahrir al-Sham," *Long War Journal* [18 September 2018]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/09/interview-with-an-iranian->



[fighter-in-hayat-tahrir-al-sham.php](http://fighter-in-hayat-tahrir-al-sham.php) [accessed 19 September 2018].

Hegghammer, Thomas, "Global Jihadism after the Iraq War," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (Winter, 2006), pp. 11-32. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.umkc.edu/stable/4330214> [accessed 6 April 2017].

Hegghammer, Thomas, "Why Terrorists Weep: The Socio-Cultural Practices of Jihadi Militants," Paul Wilkinson Memorial Lecture, University of St. Andrews [16 April 2015].  
[http://hegghammer.com/files/Hegghammer - Wilkinson Memorial Lecture.pdf](http://hegghammer.com/files/Hegghammer_-_Wilkinson_Memorial_Lecture.pdf) [accessed 5 July 2018].

- ★ Hegghammer, Thomas, "The Last Jihadi Superstar," *War on the Rocks* [30 October 2020].  
<https://warontherocks.com/2020/10/the-last-jihadi-superstar/> [accessed 2 November 2020].

This is an excellent book review of Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens' *Incitement: Anwar al-Awlaki's Western Jihad*. It is also a good overview of the significance of the American jihadist Anwar al-Awlaki. Well worth the read.

- ★ Heller, Sam, "Ahrar al-Sham's Revisionist Jihadism," *War on the Rocks* [30 September 2015].  
<http://warontherocks.com/2015/09/ahrar-al-shams-revisionist-jihadism/> [accessed 6 October 2015].

This is an excellent discussion on the roots of jihad for this group and it includes a fantastic definition on victory: "Victory is the people's adoption and embrace of the elite's message," he wrote. "At that point, neither the East nor the West will be able to extinguish the Islamic character of the revolution, and both the elite and the people will be victorious, God willing."

Hudson, Valeria M. and Hilary Matfess, "In Plain Sight: The Neglected Linkage between Brideprice and Violent Conflict," *International Security*, volume 42, number 1, 7-40 [Summer 2017].  
doi:10.1162/ISEC\_a\_00289.

ICT, "Modus Operandi of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *International Institute for Counter-Terrorism*, Herzliya, Israel [14 March 2016]. <http://www.ict.org.il/UserFiles/JWMG-Ins-Modus-Operandi-AQAP-Mar-16.pdf> [accessed 20 March 2016].

Information on the training manual and videos for AQAP. This is a summary of tactical and operational doctrine.

ICT, "Recent Jihadi Discourse Pertaining to Aviation Threats" *International Institute for Counter-Terrorism* [12 November 2015]. [http://www.ict.org.il/Article/1508/Recent-Jihadi-Discourse-Pertaining-to-Aviation?utm\\_source=activetrail&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=JWMG](http://www.ict.org.il/Article/1508/Recent-Jihadi-Discourse-Pertaining-to-Aviation?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=JWMG) [accessed 6 August 2016].

- ★ Ingram, Haroro J. "Deciphering the Siren Call of Militant Islamist Propaganda: Meaning, Credibility & Behavioural Change," The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism [30 September 2016].  
<https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ICCT-Ingram-Deciphering-the-Siren-Call-of-Militant-Islamist-Propaganda-September2016.pdf> [accessed 12 October 2016].

Excellent source of resources for understanding maneuver in the narrative space. The author does not use the terminology of MITNS, but he speaks about the same principles and techniques.

- ★ Ingram, Haroro J. "A 'Linkage-Based' Approach to Combating Militant Islamist Propaganda: A Two-Tiered Framework for Practitioners," The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism [November 2016]. <https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/ICCT-Ingram-A-Linkage-Based-Approach-Nov2016.pdf> [accessed 19 April 2018].

Great description of the linkage-based approach and an explanation of the process from opposition to fighting.

- ★ International Crisis Group, "Exploiting Disorder: al-Qaeda and the Islamic State," *International Crisis Group* [14 March 2016]. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/global/exploiting-disorder-al->

[gaeda-and-the-islamic-state.aspx](#) [accessed 18 March 2016].

Explanation of four waves of jihadism since the early 1990s. Support to the argument that ISIS is not the primary threat to any belligerent country.

Jones, Robert, "Winning the Ideological Battle for the Support of the Populace (Understanding the Role of Ideology in Insurgency)," *Small Wars Journal* [13 April 2008].

<http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/46-jones.pdf> [accessed 6 April 2016].

- ★ Jones, Seth G., Charles Vallee, Danika Newlee, Nicholas Harrington, Clayton Sharb, and Hannah Byrne, "The Evolution of the Salafi-Jihadist Threat Current and Future Challenges from the Islamic State, Al-Qaeda, and Other Groups," Center for Strategic and International Studies Transnational Threats Project [November 2018]. [https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/Jones\\_EvolvingTerroristThreat\\_FULL\\_WEB.pdf](https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/Jones_EvolvingTerroristThreat_FULL_WEB.pdf) [accessed 2 December 2018].

An excellent discussion on the development of salafi-jihadi groups from 1980 to 2018. The report is full of critical information. One bit of disturbing data is that the estimate of fighters in 2018 is 270% higher than 2001. A lot more is in here and it is worth reading to get to it.

Kaplan, Eben. "Tracking Down Terrorist Financing." Council on Foreign Relations, 4 April 2006.

<http://www.cfr.org/terrorist-financing/tracking-down-terrorist-financing/p10356> [accessed 6 March 2017].

A brief primer on the ways and methods used by terrorist groups to finance their operations.

Keatinge, Tom, "Finances of jihad: How extremist groups raise money," *BBC News* [12 December 2017].

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-30393832> [accessed 6 March 2017].

An updated primer on terrorist financing that includes ISIS activities and behaviors.

Kenney, Michael, "Al-Muhajiroun May be Appalling, but it is Not a Conveyor Belt to Terrorism," *Political Violence at a Glance* [5 October 2018]. <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2018/10/05/al-muhajiroun-may-be-appalling-but-it-is-not-a-conveyor-belt-to-terrorism/> [accessed 10 October 2018].

- ★ Khalil, Lydia, "Behind the Veil: Women in Jihad after the Caliphate," *Lowy Institute* [25 June 2019]. <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/behind-veil-women-jihad-after-caliphate> [accessed 29 June 2019].

Worth your time. This is a fascinating article on the changing role of women in the concept of modern jihad. About 9,000 words.

Khataw, Farwah, "Tracing the causes of sectarian conflict in Iraq and Syria (updated)." Masters of Science in International Relations Thesis for Graduate School at the University of Edinburgh [Unknown].

[https://www.academia.edu/36621027/Tracing\\_the\\_causes\\_of\\_sectarian\\_conflict\\_in\\_Iraq\\_and\\_Syria\\_updated\\_email\\_work\\_card=title](https://www.academia.edu/36621027/Tracing_the_causes_of_sectarian_conflict_in_Iraq_and_Syria_updated_email_work_card=title) [accessed 16 December 2019].

Kolva, Dan, "Ready, Fire, Aim: The Importance of Strategic Objectives in Countering Violent Non-State Actors," *Small Wars Journal* [22 May 2016]. [http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/ready-fire-aim-the-importance-of-strategic-objectives-in-countering-violent-non-state-actor#\\_ednref1](http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/ready-fire-aim-the-importance-of-strategic-objectives-in-countering-violent-non-state-actor#_ednref1) [accessed 23 May 2016].

- ★ Koppell, Carla, "To Fight Extremism, The World Needs to Learn How to Talk to Women", *Foreign Policy* [12 August 2015]. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/08/12/to-fight-extremism-the-world-needs-to-learn-how-to-talk-to-women--haram-isis/> [accessed 14 August 2015].

Krueger, Alan, "What Makes a Terrorist" *American Enterprise Institute* [7 November 2007].

<http://www.aei.org/publication/what-makes-a-terrorist/> [accessed 1 December 2015].

This is a more concise version of his journal article published in 2003. Terrorists are motivated by a complex collection of reasons, but poverty is not primarily one of them.

Krueger, Alan B. and Jitka Maleckova. "Education, Poverty and Terrorism: Is There a Causal Connection?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (Volume 17, Number 4), Fall 2003, Pages 119–144.  
[http://www.uvm.edu/~wgibson/PDF/kruger\\_mal.pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/~wgibson/PDF/kruger_mal.pdf) [accessed 1 December 2015].

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Lalwani, Nikita and Sam Winter-Levy, "Here's why terrorist suicide attacks are increasing: They attract rewards from ISIS and al-Qaeda," *The Washington Post* [16 August 2016].  
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The main source of the information is an article in the *Journal of Peace Research* that discusses trends in terrorism and reasons particularly for suicide terrorism. Simple theory. Still accurate. The research is available through this site: <http://jpr.sagepub.com/content/early/2016/01/13/0022343315618001.abstract>.

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[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE200/PE242/RAND\\_PE242.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE200/PE242/RAND_PE242.pdf) [accessed 24 July 2017].

- ★ McCants, William and Christopher Meserole, "The French connection: Explaining Sunni militancy around the world," Originally Published in *Foreign Affairs*. *Brookings* [25 March 2016].  
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This short article provides a profound point linking language/culture along with urbanization and unemployment in terms of generating foreign fighters. This is controversial, but the truths associated with this are worth considering. These thoughts do not address so-called lone wolf attacks in the U.S. as many of the participants are not unemployed.

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- ★ Mendelsohn, Barak, "Bound To Fail: Transnational Jihadism and the Aggregation Problem," *War on the Rocks* [28 August 2018]. <https://warontherocks.com/2018/08/bound-to-fail-transnational-jihadism-and-the-aggregation-problem/> [accessed 30 August 2018].

The problem with jihadist organizations is their inability to generate actionable authority and power over a geographic area sufficient to govern. An associated problem is that these same groups cannot generate sufficient support within the broader community to effectively govern once they control the land. This article explains these problems clearly and concisely as well as providing an excellent summary of the evolution of the associated jihadist ideology.

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The author has a bold headline, but this is an argument based off western notions of what inspires people to action. As a result the originator of the theory, Thomas Piketty, misses the mark. The complete theory is explained in an edition of *Le Monde*, but I don’t read French.

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I think the author needs to make a deeper point. Of course, radicals misquote previous scholars. Of course, radicals do not know their own history or intellectual history. That does not change the reality that they are cherry picking support from historic figures with global resonance.

The value in a proper understanding is true. The author states that the better we know the source material the more effectively we can create a counter-narrative. Though, I disagree with the term “counter-narrative,” I believe that with information and knowledge comes better decision making.

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[isis-defeat](#) [accessed 18 February 2018].

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This is an excellent summary of the origins, development, and transmogrification of the Salafi-Jihadi movement. Though I do not agree with all of the conclusions, I believe this provides a critical tool for understanding how we got to where we are.

## Al-Qaeda

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Associated Press description: Upon learning that al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb had succeeded in seizing Mali's northern half in the spring of 2012, Al-Qaida's No. 2 based in Yemen penned two letters offering advice to his fellow jihadists from his own experience trying to govern a slice of southern Yemen. Nasser al-Wahishi, who previously served as Osama bin Laden's personal secretary, urges his colleagues in Mali to focus on day-to-day amenities, like providing electricity and running water to the areas under their control, in an effort to win local support. The letters are dated May 21 and Aug. 6, 2012. They were found in the Ministry of Finance's Tax Building in Timbuktu, alongside a 17-page case study on how to apply Shariah in Yemen's Abyan and Shabwa provinces, written by al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

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Robots killing humans should be avoided. One can make both a utilitarian and ethical argument for this statement. I would suggest that if a society believes that a given conflict is not worth risking the lives of their sons and daughters then that conflict should not be waged. War is being made too easy and with too few consequences for technologically advanced countries. War or conflict should cause deep and difficult conversations. The state sponsored taking of human life must force painful reflection and legal and moral judgments. Otherwise we will become like the Skynet security system in the Terminator movie franchise – a killing machine fulfilling basic logic calculations and exacting the coldly analyzed and reasoned solutions.

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A good summary of the fight in Sri Lanka.

## Evolution of Conflict

### Science Fiction Prototypes

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This is an excellent source that is packed with useful understanding on what I call narrative war. Read it; or, at least look at the wonderful artwork and scan the information packed in both the graphic novel and the accompanying essays. This graphic novel and accompanying information papers about the “future” of warfare in a fictional foreign country does a good job of describing the environment of information warfare taking place in the American newscape today. This is 71 pages, but a lot of that goes by quickly as it includes graphic novel pages as well as information essays.

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Diehl, Paul F. and Gary Goertz. *War and Peace in International Rivalry*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 22 October 2001. <https://www.press.umich.edu/pdf/0472111272.pdf> [accessed 12 February 2019].

Ligon, Gina and Robert Jones, editors. *The Age of Disruption: How Power Shifts Create More Conflict*. A Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) Periodic Publication [5 September 2019]. <https://nsiteam.com/the-age-of-disruption-how-power-shifts-create-more-conflict/> [accessed 23 September 2019].

Walsh, James Igoe and Marcus Schulzke. *Drones and Support for the Use of Force*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2018.

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The gist is that most people don’t really think about using drones, but if they are asked, they are more inclined to support a use of force that doesn’t actually risk anyone on our side.

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Biddle, Tami Davis, "Coercion Theory: A Basic Introduction for Practitioners," Texas National Security Review: Volume 3, Issue 2 (Spring 2020). <https://tnsr.org/2020/02/coercion-theory-a-basic-introduction-for-practitioners/> [accessed 17 May 2022].

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I acknowledge that this is a few years old, but I believe it is still worth your time.

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- ★ Cruickshank, Paul, “A View from the CT Foxhole: Patrick Skinner, Police Officer in Savannah, Georgia, and Former CIA Case Officer in Afghanistan and Iraq,” *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point CTC Sentinel*, November 2018, Volume 11, Issue 10. <https://ctc.usma.edu/view-ct-foxhole-patrick-skinner-police-officer-savannah-georgia-former-cia-case-officer-afghanistan-iraq/> [accessed 12 November 2018].

Great read! He explains the true approach to influencing people. Real influence happens over hundreds and thousands of interactions and not through grand gestures. Well articulated and well-worth your time in reading and reflection.

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Flintoft, Caroline, “Misery as Strategy: The Human Cost of Conflict,” *International Crisis Group* [31 May 2018]. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/misery-strategy-human-cost-conflict> [accessed 31 May 2018].

Freedberg, Sydney, Jr. “War Without Fear: DepSecDef Work On How AI Changes Conflict,” *Breaking Defense* [31 May 2017]. <http://breakingdefense.com/2017/05/killer-robots-arent-the-problem-its-unpredictable-ai/> [accessed 5 June 2017].

Freedberg, Sydney, Jr. “Artificial Stupidity: When Artificial Intelligence + Human = Disaster,” *Breaking Defense* [2 June 2017]. <http://breakingdefense.com/2017/06/artificial-stupidity-when-artificial-intel-human-disaster/> [accessed 5 June 2017].

This is a great series on understanding the implications of the Third Offset.

- ★ Freedberg, Sydney, Jr. “Why A ‘Human In The Loop’ Can’t Control AI: Richard Danzig,” *Breaking Defense* [1 June 2018]. <https://breakingdefense.com/2018/06/why-a-human-in-the-loop-cant-control-ai-richard-danzig/> [accessed 4 June 2018].

The challenge of functioning with an AI on a complex battlefield is expressed well in this article. AI is more than killer robots. The idea of a human in the loop only matters if the human knows what the AI knows and

can make an informed decision.

- ★ Fryer-Biggs, Zachary, "Coming Soon to a Battlefield: Robots That Can Kill," *The Atlantic* [3 September 2019]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2019/09/killer-robots-and-new-era-machine-driven-warfare/597130/> [accessed 9 September 2019].

This is an excellent article. I want to go on record as being opposed to the development of Skynet (in any form) and the furthering of AI for the purpose of discriminating to kill human beings through autonomous systems. The most concerning language used in this article and others is the language of inevitability or of it being out of our control. No one wants to see the road they are walking. Rather, they focus solely on the technology on which they are working. This lack of holistic responsibility is what will lead to the immorality of creating robots that kill human beings. If a conflict is not worth the loss of an American life then the conflict isn't worth being fought. The potential for loss of life is what should make conflict rare and deeply considered. I hope to write more on this topic as it is an issue about which I have deep concern.

Gobry, Pascal-Emmanuel, "The myth of America's invincible military," *The Week* [11 January 2017]. <http://theweek.com/articles/672266/myth-americas-invincible-military> [accessed 12 January 2017].

Brief comparison of the US military invincibility to that of France before WWII. The prediction is that, like France, opponents of the US are seeking asymmetric opportunities to overthrow US capabilities.

Graham, David A. "Are Mercenaries Really a Cheaper Way of War?" *Defense One* [9 August 2017]. <http://www.defenseone.com/politics/2017/08/are-mercenaries-really-cheaper-way-war/140137/> [accessed 10 August 2017].

Grier, Peter, "The First Offset," *Air Force Magazine* [June 2016]. <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Magazine%20Documents/2016/June%202016/0616offset.pdf> [accessed 4 August 2016].

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Horton, Alex and Aaron Gregg, "Use of military contractors shrouds true costs of war. Washington wants it that way, study says." *The Washington Post* [30 June 2020]. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2020/06/30/military-contractor-study/> [accessed 1 July 2020].

Institute for Economics & Peace. Global Peace Index 2018: Measuring Peace in a Complex World, Sydney, June 2018. <http://visionofhumanity.org/reports> [accessed 2 July 2018].

Jennings, Nathan, Amos Fox, and Adam Taliaferro, "The Us Army is Wrong on Future War," *Modern Warfare Institute* [18 December 2018]. <https://mwi.usma.edu/us-army-wrong-future-war/> [accessed 14 March 2019].

This is an interesting discussion on where 3-0 has gotten things wrong. I will rarely say this, but check out the comments at the linked site as there are some well-done counterpoints.

Kallenborn, Zachary, "The Era of the Drone Swarm is Coming, and We Need to be Ready for It," *Modern Warfare Institute at West Point* [25 October 2018]. <https://mwi.usma.edu/era-drone-swarm-coming-need-ready/> [accessed 30 October 2018].

Keener, Craig S. "An Ethnohistorical Analysis of Iroquois Assault Tactics Used against Fortified Settlements of the Northeast in the Seventeenth Century," *Ethnohistory*, Volume 46, Number 4, Fall 1999. <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/11612> [accessed 26 July 2017].

- ★ Kessel, Jonah M. "Killer Robots Aren't Regulated. Yet. "Killing in the Age of Algorithms" is a New York Times documentary examining the future of artificial intelligence and warfare." *The New York Times* [13 December 2019]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/technology/autonomous-weapons-video.html> [accessed 21 December 2019].

Watch the video and read the article. This is an interesting and enjoyable presentation of what I consider to be the most important long-term ethical and moral problem for military leaders worldwide. Robots on the battlefield. In a drive for efficiency in warfare – a natural drive for all combatants – it makes sense to bring greater automation to the battlefield. The inevitable end to such efforts is something none of us really want – Skynet. The problem is that such results are seemingly so far away that almost everyone in charge of these design efforts continues down the course without sufficient concern.

Klein, Gary M. “Cognitive Training to Achieve Overmatch in the #FutureOfWar,” *The Strategy Bridge* [24 March 2015]. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2015/11/21/cognitive-training-to-achieve-overmatch-in-the-futureofwar> [accessed 29 July 2020].

Knowles, Emily and Abigail Watson, “Remote Warfare: Lessons learned from contemporary theatres,” *Oxford Research Group, Remote Warfare Programme* [June 2018]. <https://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=4026f48e-df60-458b-a318-2a3eb4522ae7> [accessed 3 August 2018].

Kricheli, Ilana, Yotam Rosner, Aviad Mendelboim, and Yoram Schweitzer, “Suicide Bombings in 2016: The Highest Number of Fatalities,” *The Institute for National Security Studies Insight No. 887*, January 5, 2017. [http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/No.%20887%20-%20Terrorism%202016%20report\\_website.pdf](http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/No.%20887%20-%20Terrorism%202016%20report_website.pdf) [accessed 5 January 2017].

Good statistics in the report on suicide terrorist attacks in 2016. The numbers and the brief analysis are useful.

LaFree, Gary, Min Xie, and Aila M. Matanock, “The Contagious Diffusion of World-Wide Terrorism,” *National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)*, University of Maryland and University of California Berkley [March 2016].

The conclusions of the study are not, in themselves earth-shaking. What this does provide is a sense in the change of terrorism in terms of diffusion and concentration over time. This may be reflective of al-Qaeda like

Luttwak, Edward, “Give War a Chance,” *Foreign Affairs*; Jul/Aug 1999; 78, 4. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1999-07-01/give-war-chance> [accessed 3 March 2017].

The author argues that war serves a critical function in terms of allowing people to progress beyond war to lasting peace. Prematurely or foolishly forcing wars to unnatural conclusions runs the risk of freezing conflict in a perpetual state.

Manea, Octavian. Reflections on the Continuities in War and Warfare. *Small War Journal*, 29 March 2014. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/reflections-on-the-continuities-in-war-and-warfare> [accessed 9 August 2016].

Maoz, Zeev and Bruce Russett, “Normative and structural causes of democratic peace, 1946-1986,” *The American Political Science Review*; Sep 1993; 87, 3; 624-638.

One of the first academic attempts to explain the theory that democracies do not go to war with each other.

Maxey, Levi, “Starvation Serves as a Weapon for Dictators and Terrorists,” *The Cipher Brief* [6 September 2017]. <https://www.thecipherbrief.com/article/tech/starvation-serves-weapon-dictators-terrorists> [accessed 6 September 2017].

Michelson, Brian M. “Blitzkrieg Redux: The Coming Warbot Revolution,” *The Strategy Bridge* [28 February 2017]. <http://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/2/28/blitzkrieg-redux-the-coming-warbot-revolution> [accessed 1 March 2017].

A frightening article advocating for Skynet-capable robots to be the primary killers in the war to come.

Michelson, Brian M. “Warbot Ethics: A Framework for Autonomy and Accountability,” *The Strategy Bridge* [18 May 2017]. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/5/18/warbot-ethics-a-framework-for-autonomy-and-accountability> [accessed 24 May 2017].

Moghadam, Assaf and Michel Wyss, “Five Myths about Sponsor-Proxy Relationships,” *Lawfare* [16

December 2018]. <https://www.lawfareblog.com/five-myths-about-sponsor-proxy-relationships> [accessed 19 December 2018].

Muggah, Robert and John P. Sullivan, "The Coming Crime Wars," *Foreign Policy* [21 September 2018]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/09/21/the-coming-crime-wars/> [accessed 24 September 2018].

Munich Security Report 2017: Post-Truth, Post-West, Post-Order? Munich, Germany: Munich Security Conference Foundation, January 2017. <https://www.securityconference.de/en/discussion/munich-security-report/munich-security-report-2017/> [accessed 16 February 2017].

This is a great summary of international relations neo-liberalism from a European perspective. The graphics alone are worth the read. The introduction is essential to understanding how Donald Trump is viewed from Europe.

★ North, Douglass C., John Joseph Wallis, Steven B. Webb, and Barry R. Weingast, "Limited Access Orders in the Developing World: A New Approach to the Problems of Development," The World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, Country Relations Division, Policy Research Working Paper 4359, September 2007. <http://econweb.umd.edu/~wallis/MyPapers/Limited Access Orders in the Developing WorldWPS 4359.pdf> [accessed 15 June 2016].

Essential theory in understanding not just economic development, but also conflict resolution. Conflict resolution involves the control of violence and this theory explains the role that violence management has in limited access orders which are the majority of nations around the world and every nation in which US military forces deploy.

Ortal, Eran, "An End to Repression – A Sixth Era for Ground Warfare," *The Dado Center Journal for Operational Art*, Volume 6, Force Design, Part A, Dado Center for Interdisciplinary Military Studies, January 2016, 135-170.

Pavlik, Melissa, "A Great and Sudden Change: The Global Political Violence Landscape Before and After the Covid-19 Pandemic," Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project [4 August 2020]. <https://acleddata.com/2020/08/04/a-great-and-sudden-change-the-global-political-violence-landscape-before-and-after-the-covid-19-pandemic/> [accessed 14 August 2020].

Peck, Michael, "Forget Russia: Is Finland the Hybrid Warfare Champion?" *The National Interest* [27 October 2018]. <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/forget-russia-finland-hybrid-warfare-champion-34362> [accessed 29 October 2018].

Peltier, Heidi. "The Growth of the "Camo Economy" and the Commercialization of the Post-9/11 Wars," A Costs of War Research Paper from Brown University [30 June 2020]. <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2020/Peltier%202020%20-%20Growth%20of%20Camo%20Economy%20-%20June%2030%202020%20-%20FINAL.pdf> [accessed 1 July 2020].

This is an important source of data on contractor costs with respect to casualties and money for GWOT.

Petraeus, David, "Cyber Changed War, But The Causes And Conduct Of Conflict Remain Human," *Huffington Post* [29 March 2017]. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/david-petraeus-cyber-war\\_us\\_58da8731e4b0286e65b5f70e](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/david-petraeus-cyber-war_us_58da8731e4b0286e65b5f70e) [accessed 30 March 2017].

Is warfare always the same or does it fundamentally change when technology changes? Petraeus makes the argument that war is still and will always be fundamentally the same.

Petraeus, David. Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee Hearing "The State of the World," 1 February 2017. <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/AS/AS00/20170201/105509/HHRG-115-AS00-Wstate-PetraeusD-20170201.pdf> [accessed 1 February 2017].

This testimony represents one of the best arguments for the world order as a created entity that needs to be led and maintained by key powers. Specifically, in the opinion of retired General Petraeus, the US.



Phillips, Gary E. "Soldier 2040," The Army Press [31 August 2016].  
<http://armypress.dodlive.mil/files/2016/08/16-4F-Phillips-31Aug16.pdf> [accessed 15 January 2017].

This is a short fictional account of the future of warfare through the description of a tactical engagement. The line that matters most is "The 2040 soldier will still be required to use the tools of fire and maneuver to bend adversaries to their will. This is a constant of combat from the first fight of Neanderthal tribes to the 2040 battle at the squad level." I disagree that the battlefield of 2040 will be about fire and maneuver.

Phillips, Gary E. "Cyber Specialists and Future Force Structure: "Jemes" & "Soldier 2040,"" *Small Wars Journal* [31 August 2016]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/cyber-specialists-and-future-force-structure-%E2%80%9Cjemes%E2%80%9D-%E2%80%9Csoldier-2040%E2%80%9D> [accessed 15 January 2017].

This is an extension of the Soldier 2040 article and includes all of the Soldier 2040 discussion. The most important line is "The need for personnel in the Army grows and shrinks; the need for firepower never shrinks." I disagree with this statement as well unless one reassess the definition of the word firepower. If this solely means kinetic firepower then it may be wrong.

Price, Bryan C. "Terrorism as Cancer: How to Combat an Incurable Disease," *Terrorism and Political Violence* [9 June 2017]. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2017.1330200> [accessed 14 July 2017].

Terrorism as cancer is an interesting approach, but the article does not really give a great deal more than that. The first couple of pages provide a useful discussion of the evolution of counterterrorism doctrine. The best discussion is that on palliative care and this gets close to the emphasis on healing wounds rather than on simply creating them.

Richardson, Erik, "Beyond Ender: Amplified Intelligence and the Age of the School Wars," Strategic Study India Blogspot [23 October 2016]. <http://strategicstudyindia.blogspot.com/2016/10/beyond-ender-amplified-intelligence-and.html> [accessed 15 January 2017].

Short article outlining the way that human development and training can move beyond where AI can achieve any time in the near future.

Robbins, Gary, "As Afghanistan war nears end, details emerge on how Predator drone revolutionized warfare," *Stars and Stripes* [20 June 2021]. <https://www.stripes.com/theaters/middle-east/2021-06-20/As-Afghanistan-war-nears-end-details-emerge-on-how-Predator-drone-revolutionized-warfare-1747852.html> [accessed 21 June 2021].

Rosato, Sebastian, "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory," *The American Political Science Review*; Nov 2003; 97, 4; 585-602.

I like this article though I expect many will question the author's argument against the weight of other authors involved in the debate.

Rosen, Stephen Peter, "Future Fights: Planning for the Next War," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2018 Issue [4 March 2018]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/review-essay/2018-02-13/future-fights> [accessed 5 March 2018].

★ Rosen, Elizabeth, "The Vietnam War, as Seen by the Victors," *The Atlantic* [16 April 2015].  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/04/the-vietnam-war-as-seen-by-the-north-vietnamese/390627/> [accessed 2 May 2016].

Runkle, Benjamin, "Preparing for Warfare's Subterranean Future," *War on the Rocks* [16 April 2015].  
<https://warontherocks.com/2015/04/preparing-for-warfares-subterranean-future/> [accessed 23 September 2018].

Sampaio, Antonio, "The New Frontlines Are in the Slums: The Middle East's wars are turning cities into Stalingrads," *Foreign Policy* [3 July 2018]. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/07/03/the-new-frontlines-are-in-the-slums/> [accessed 5 July 2018].

Schuety, Clayton and Lucas Will, "An Air Force 'Way of Swarm': Using Wargaming and Artificial

Intelligence to Train Drones," *War on the Rocks* [21 September 2018].

<https://warontherocks.com/2018/09/an-air-force-way-of-swarm-using-wargaming-and-artificial-intelligence-to-train-drones/> [accessed 24 September 2018].

Shlapak, David A. and Michael W. Johnson, "Outnumbered, Outranged, and Outgunned: How Russia Defeats NATO," *War on the Rocks* [21 April 2016].

<http://warontherocks.com/2016/04/outnumbered-outranged-and-outgunned-how-russia-defeats-nato/> [accessed 25 April 2016].

Spencer, John, "How drone swarms could change urban warfare [Commentary]," *C4ISRNet* [11 December 2017]. <https://www.c4isrnet.com/opinion/the-compass/net-defense-blogs/2017/12/11/how-drone-swarms-could-change-urban-warfare-commentary/> [accessed 12 December 2017].

Stalinsky, Steven and R. Sosnow, "A Decade Of Jihadi Organizations' Use Of Drones – From Early Experiments By Hizbullah, Hamas, And Al-Qaeda To Emerging National Security Crisis For The West As ISIS Launches First Attack Drones," *MEMRI Inquiry and Analysis Series No. 1300* [21 February 2017]. <https://www.memri.org/reports/decade-jihadi-organizations-use-drones—early-experiments-hizbullah-hamas-and-al-qaeda> [accessed 18 February 2019].

Stevenson, John A. "Space Deterrence: The Vulnerability-Credibility Tradeoff in Space Domain Deterrence Stability," NSI Concept Paper prepared for Strategic Multi-Layer (SMA) Contested Space Operations [April 2018]. [http://nsiteam.com/social/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Space\\_CP2\\_Detterence\\_finalv4.pdf](http://nsiteam.com/social/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Space_CP2_Detterence_finalv4.pdf) [accessed 18 April 2018].

Stoker, Donald and Craig Whiteside, "Blurred Lines: Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War – Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking," *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 73: No. 1, Article 4, Winter 2020. <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol73/iss1/4> [accessed 2 February 2020].

Sullivan, Ian M., John C. Bauer, Eric L. Berry and Luke Shabro, "Understanding Tomorrow Begins Today: The Operational Environment Through 2035," US Army TRADOC Mad Scientist Program [20 June 2017]. <https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/mad-scientist/b/weblog/posts/understanding-tomorrow-begins-today-the-operational-environment-through-2035> [accessed 21 June 2017].

From the executive summary: "The Operational Environment (OE) is a combination of conditions and variables that impact a commander's decision-making and his/her ability to employ capabilities. The OEs of today and the future will be marked by instability. The combination of this instability with the dizzying advances being made in technology and the increased velocity of human interaction means that the OE will present an array of threats that will be lethal and multi-domain (land, sea, air, space, and cyber)."

Sullivan, John P. "SWJ Book Review – *Underground Warfare*," *Small Wars Journal* [20 September 2018]. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/swj-book-review-underground-warfare> [accessed 23 September 2018].

Excellent citations to support the book review and further understanding of the general topic area.

Surkov, Vladislav (published under the pseudonym Natan Dubovitsky), "Without Sky," first published as an annex to the magazine *Russian Pioneer*, No 46 (May 2014).

[http://www.bewilderingstories.com/issue582/without\\_sky.html](http://www.bewilderingstories.com/issue582/without_sky.html) [accessed 2 December 2016].

A short and powerful science fiction story with a critical quote: "The simple-hearted commanders of the past strove for victory. Now they did not act so stupidly. That is, some, of course, still clung to the old habits and tried to exhume from the archives old slogans of the type: victory will be ours. It worked in some places, but basically, war was now understood as a process, more exactly, part of a process, its acute phase, but maybe not the most important."

Ting, Eric, "UC Berkeley professor's eerie lethal drone video goes viral," *SF Gate* [18 November 2017]. <http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/UC-Berkeley-killer-robots-artificial-intelligence-12368152.php>

[accessed 19 November 2017].

Tucker, Patrick, "The Next Big War Will Turn on AI, Says US Secret-Weapons Czar," *Defense One* [28 March 2017]. <http://www.defenseone.com/technology/2017/03/next-big-war-will-turn-ai-says-pentagons-secret-weapons-czar/136537/> [accessed 30 March 2017].

This is a report on a speech given to the Air Force Association by William Roper, the DoD head of the Strategic Capabilities Office. This provides some legitimately interesting views of the future of war. It is a high-technology and driven by big data. Unfortunately, this seems a lot like pre-Skynet.

U.S. Army TRADOC G-2, "The Operational Environment and the Changing Character of Future Warfare," United States Army TRADOC G-2 Operational Environment Enterprise, Washington D.C. [20 July 2017]. <https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/m/mediagallery/200219> [accessed 24 March 2018].

van der Dennen, Johan M. G. "On war: concepts, definitions, research data: a short literature survey and bibliography." UNESCO Yearbook of Peace and Conflict Studies 1980. Paris: UNESCO, 1981.

Webb, Don, "Review Article of John Dominic Crossan, God & Empire," *Bewildering Stories*, Issue 754 [19 March 2018]. [http://www.bewilderingstories.com/issue754/god\\_empire\\_rev.html](http://www.bewilderingstories.com/issue754/god_empire_rev.html) [accessed 18 June 2018].

"Crossan takes direct aim at apocalyptic eschatologists. "Since the Age of Enlightenment has been replaced by the Age of Entertainment, the future clash [will] not be between science and religion but between both of them and fantasy" (p. 197). In other words, popular fantasy creates a fake reality and, in some quarters, suicidal delusion (pp. 199-201)."

Wharton, Terron. "Through the Looking Glass: The Reflectionism Theory of International Relations." *InterAgency Journal* 7, no. 2 (Summer 2016): 5-22. Accessed August 23, 2016. <http://thesimonscenter.org/iaj-7-2-summer-2016/>.

Quoted from the conclusion: The purpose of this article was to answer two questions: Why do States use Realist methods for Liberal aims? Subsequently, if Reflectionism answers question one, then how does conflict initiate, develop, and terminate in a Reflectionist world? I believe that Reflectionism provides a new, compelling construct for international politics, and that the RCM describes with relative accuracy the cycle of conflict.

Williams, Brad D. "Emerging 'hyperwar' signals 'AI-fueled, machine-waged' future of conflict," *The Fifth Domain* [8 August 2017]. <https://www.fifthdomain.com/dod/2017/08/07/emerging-hyperwar-signals-ai-fueled-machine-waged-future-of-conflict/> [accessed 10 August 2017].

The article references another article and interview. Essentially in the other material the basic point is that technology will shrink the OODA loop to the point of inconsequence. Humans will not be able to keep up with the machine decision making.

Wise, Doug, "Future Warfare Will Not Allow Meaningful Human Control," *The Cipher Brief* [15 January 2017]. <https://www.thecipherbrief.com/article/tech/future-warfare-will-not-allow-meaningful-human-control-1092> [accessed 17 January 2017].

This is a short op-ed kind of piece. The most important point is that made in the headline – too fast for human intervention. He does not sound remorseful regarding the long-term implications of the problem – Skynet, for instance.

Zimmerman, Nils, "The economics of peace (and war)," *Deutsche Welle* [24 October 2017]. <http://www.dw.com/en/the-economics-of-peace-and-war/a-41093149> [accessed 25 October 2017].

## Historical Context

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<https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/45946> [accessed 17 May 2022].

Lacey, James G., ed. *Enduring Strategic Rivalries*. Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analysis, August 2014.

Lee, Wayne E. *Barbarians and Brothers: Anglo-American Warfare, 1500-1865*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Darden, Jessica Trisko, "How women wage war – a short history of IS brides, Nazi guards and FARC insurgents," *The Conversation* [8 March 2019]. <https://theconversation.com/how-women-wage-war-a-short-history-of-is-brides-nazi-guards-and-farc-insurgents-113011> [accessed 21 March 2019].

Fandy, Mamoun, "Tribe Vs. Islam: The Post-Colonial Arab State and the Democratic Imperative," *Middle East Policy Council*, volume III, June 1994, number 2. <https://www.mepc.org/node/4949> [accessed 2 July 2018].

★ Garfinkle, Adam, "The Fall of Empires and the Formation of the Modern Middle East," Foreign Policy Research Institute [12 February 2016]. <http://www.fpri.org/article/2016/04/fall-empires-formation-modern-middle-east/> [accessed 18 April 2016].

★ Kaplan, Robert D. "How Islam Created Europe," *The Atlantic* [May 2016]. <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/05/how-islam-created-europe/476388/> [accessed 19 April 2016].

Marlantes, Karl, "Vietnam: The War That Killed Trust," *The New York Times* [7 January 2017]. <https://mobile.nytimes.com/2017/01/07/opinion/sunday/vietnam-the-war-that-killed-trust.html> [accessed 13 January 2017].

This is an interesting discussion on the role and nature of trust within American society and how Vietnam influenced that trust. Most of this is based off personal experience of the author.

Mead, Walter Russell, "The Jacksonian Revolt: American Populism and the Liberal Order," *Foreign Affairs* [20 January 2017]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2017-01-20/jacksonian-revolt?cid=%3Fcid%3Ddemc-paywall-free-the-jacksonian-revolt-013017> [accessed 1 February 2017].

Shurkin, Michael, "The French Way of War," *Politico Magazine* [17 November 2015]. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/11/the-french-way-of-war-213372> [accessed 3 April 2018].

I didn't read this when first published, but I find the perspective and observations worth considering.

Shurkin, Michael, "Modern War for Romantics: Ferdinand Foch and the Principles of War," *War on the Rocks* [8 July 2020]. <https://warontherocks.com/2020/07/modern-war-for-romantics-ferdinand-foch-and-the-principles-of-war/> [accessed 9 July 2020].

Spencer, John, "The Destructive Age of Urban Warfare; Or, How to Kill A City and How to Protect It," *Modern Warfare Institute* [28 March 2019]. <https://mwi.usma.edu/destructive-age-urban-warfare-kill-city-protect/> [accessed 2 April 2019].

Takeyh, Ray. "What really Happened in Iran: The CIA, the Ouster of Mosaddeq, and the Restoration of the Shah." *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 4 (Jul, 2014): 2-12, <https://lumen.cgsccarl.com/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1541490751?accountid=28992> (accessed 27 June 2016).

Waters, Florence, "Germany's grand First World War jihad experiment," *The Daily Telegraph* [10 August 2014]. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/museums/11022199/Germanys-Grand-WW1-Jihad->

[Experiment.html](#) [accessed 22 April 2017].

A good explanation of one component of the German effort to promote jihad during WWI.



## Videos (some audio)

Al Jazeera, "ISIL: Target Russia – Featured Documentary," *Al Jazeera* (English) [27 May 2017].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HDytlHGHPY> [accessed 5 June 2017].

Video is 47:15. Includes excellent observations of the organization and conduct of operations by ISIS aligned fighters in Afghanistan. The entire focus of the production is understanding the Russian focus of ISIS in Afghanistan. Claims to be the first filmed interview with ISIS female fighters.

al-Tamimi, Aymenn Jawad, "'You were free'- Nasheed from Islamic State's Ajnad Media," Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi's Blog on Pundicity [10 March 2018]. <http://www.aymennjawad.org/2018/03/you-were-free-nasheed-from-islamic-state-ajnad> [accessed 19 April 2018].

Associated Press, "Drone Video Shows Devastation in Raqqa," *Associated Press* [19 October 2017].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJDu7cKFA6M> [accessed 12 December 2017].

Video is 1:00. This presents video footage without sound of Raqqa.

Associated Press, "Drone footage shows extent of Mosul destruction," *Associated Press* [10 November 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QneVmFfIt8Q> [accessed 12 December 2017].

Video is 1:05. This presents video footage without sound of Mosul.

Baddorf, Zack, "Today is the Female Slave Market Day in ad-Dawlah," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [25 May 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoYzcnYqtuo> [accessed 27 May 2017].

Video is 2:25. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector who was moved to reject the group through the selling of Muslim women as sex slaves. The audio is Arabic with English subtitles.

★ Carter, Ash interview by David Gergen, "Defeating ISIS: Inside the Campaign Against a Brutal Enemy," Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School [26 October 2017].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reWy40U1WIQ&t=2889s> [accessed 31 October 2017].

This interview should be linked to the special report titled "A Lasting Defeat: The Campaign to Destroy ISIS" at [https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/Lasting%20Defeat%20-%20final\\_0.pdf](https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/Lasting%20Defeat%20-%20final_0.pdf). This video is more than an hour long with the main interview beginning after twenty minutes.

CENTCOM, "March 29th, West Mosul, Iraq," *CENTCOM Public Affairs* [29 March 2017].

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Video is 2:20. CENTCOM video showing civilians being moved into a building with the alleged intent of drawing a coalition strike and blaming the coalition for civilian casualties.

CNN, "Battling 'crusaders': ISIS turns to glossy magazine for propaganda," *CNN News* [17 September 2014]. <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/17/world/meast/isis-magazine/index.html> [accessed 25 March 2017].

Video is 1:51. This provides a simple and short explanation of Dabiq magazine and some of the primary topics of discussion in the magazine.

CNN, "Did intel community warn Obama on ISIS?" *CNN News* [29 September 2014].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eih479218ME> [accessed 25 March 2017].

Video is 5:31. Did the president know about ISIS as a powerful player and when did he know. This is not an important video, but it has historic value in explaining the sequence of information regarding ISIS.

D'Agata, Charlie, "ISIS mounts bloody last stand in Mosul," *CBS Evening News* [23 June 2017].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2Qnvow5FiY> [accessed 28 December 2017].

Video is 2:04. Great imagery and useful commentary on the destruction of Mosul.

Damon, Arwa, "CNN Inside Raqqa, former ISIS stronghold," *CNN News* [19 October 2017].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9vb3lCV7Qc> [accessed 1 November 2017].

Video is 2:40. The reporter speaks the entire time which weakens the power of the images. Despite this, this video still provides some of the best images of the destruction associated with the defeat of ISIS in Raqqa.

Fox, Amaryllis, "Former Undercover CIA Officer Talks War And Peace," *Al Jazeera* [13 June 2016].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WEd34oW9BI&t=13s> [accessed 24 March 2017].

At 3:02 in length, this is short and to the point. Everybody thinks they are the good guy. Powerful and poignant.

★ Frontline, "Confronting ISIS," 12 October 2016 [originally aired 11 October 2016].

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/confronting-isis/> [accessed 12 October 2016].

Frontline videos are generally excellent in understanding issues in the Middle East. This video represents the best video representation of the fight against ISIS from 2014 to present. This offers a regional approach though the perspective is from the US and includes numerous interview excerpts from senior US government officials.

Frontline, "Battle for Iraq and Hunting ISIS" 31 January 2017.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/battle-for-iraq/> and

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/hunting-isis/> [accessed 25 March 2017].

Website Description: Reporter Ghaith Abdul-Ahad goes inside the battle against ISIS for control of the city of Mosul. FRONTLINE follows an elite special operations unit at the center of the fight against ISIS in Iraq.

Frontline, "Iraq Uncovered," 21 March 2017. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/iraq-uncovered/> [accessed 25 March 2017].

Website Description: FRONTLINE investigates allegations of abuse of Sunni Muslim civilians by powerful Shia militias.

The reporter is Ramita Navai.

★ Future of Life Institute, "Slaughterbots," *Future of Life Institute* [12 November 2017].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CO6M2Hsola&t=> [accessed 19 November 2017].

This is a dramatized video that demonstrates the dangers of drone warfare taken to an extreme of artificial intelligence combined with miniaturization. This portrays a presentation of the capability followed by dramatized news coverage of the miniature drone attacks with intent to control political voting and governed by information collected through social media. The message is powerful and important. Video is 7:47.

Fuuse Films, "Jihad," 14 August 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usgevtEppg> [accessed 13 April 2017].

This is a report on Jihad based on interviews with British participants in the jihad in Afghanistan and elsewhere. No solutions other than to understand and accept so that young people have an alternative to jihad.

The reporter is Deeyah Khan.

Green, Lilly, " Hamas Guidebook to Social Media Operations," Prepared by the New Media Department in the Information Office of Hamas Interior Ministry [18 July 2014].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yH2QOZorDws> [accessed 24 October 2017].

ICSVE, "My Journey Towards Jihad," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [11 April 2018]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WUWplVy9\\_c&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WUWplVy9_c&feature=youtu.be) [accessed 12 April 2018].

Video is 6:29. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an imprisoned ISIS participant who joined based off videos of the fighting in Syria and recruited through Facebook.

ICSVE, "A Child of the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [12 April 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oYIUyr1-hQU&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 12 April 2018].

Video is 4:04. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an imprisoned ISIS participant who took his son to the caliphate. This is a story of the son.

ICSVE, "Marriage in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [14 April 2018]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wDofH\\_QTmo&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wDofH_QTmo&feature=youtu.be) [accessed 15 April 2018].

Video is 3:42. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector who tells a story about an ISIS foreign fighter who stalks and lies to steal a man's wife.

ICSVE, "Justice in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [22 April 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeVmDEJX6wM&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 23 April 2018].

Video is 2:34. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector who is imprisoned in Kosovo. He traveled to Syria twice to fight against the al-Assad regime. The second time he took his wife. His stated reason for defection is the injustice toward the wives, and especially, the widows of fighters. Despite his problems with ISIS he doesn't feel the West is better.

ICSVE, "A Sister Walking in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [23 April 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SY55Owufllw> [accessed 24 April 2018].

Video is 2:06. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector who is imprisoned. He explains the story of his sister taken and killed for not having the right documentation to be with her brother.

ICSVE, "We are in the Time of Jihad," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [27 April 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bGZz3fcy3-M&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 29 April 2018].

Video is 1:51. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector who expresses falseness in the faith and piety of ISIS leaders and fighters.

ICSVE, "The Call to Jihad," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [28 April 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYsXGGINbbc&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 1 May 2018].

Video is 4:34. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Kosovar soldier who traveled to Syria to fight in the Free Syrian Army. He was arrested and imprisoned.

ICSVE, "Two Brothers in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [3 May 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8C3gEHhmDFk&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 4 May 2018].

Video is 3:51. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of an Iraqi man who is lured into ISIS by his brother through threats and coercion. He was arrested and imprisoned.

ICSVE, "The Islamic State takes Care of You," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [22 May 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDVeEuh28Ks&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 23 May 2018].

Video is 2:02. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian man who joined ISIS after fighting in the Free Syrian Army. He described the horrible living conditions.

ICSVE, "Rules of the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [23 May 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQIlyfGAXvY&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 31 May 2018].

2018].

Video is 2:55. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian man who joined ISIS as a cub of the caliphate. He tells of serving in the morality police.

ICSVE, "The Islamic State Hisbah," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [25 May 2018]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtShqJuzx\\_8&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtShqJuzx_8&feature=youtu.be) [accessed 31 May 2018].

Video is 2:59. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian man who joined ISIS after fighting in the Free Syrian Army. He described working with the morality police.

ICSVE, "The Real Jihad," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [28 May 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDzW7QKifW8&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 31 May 2018].

Video is 4:25. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian man who joined ISIS after fighting in the Free Syrian Army. He described the horrible living conditions.

ICSVE, "Justice for our Sisters in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [28 May 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zysA3GAusy4&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 31 May 2018].

Video is 3:03. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian defector from ISIS describing the misbehavior of ISIS members.

ICSVE, "Sex in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [8 June 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNzz6v6W4jc&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 10 June 2018].

Video is 2:55. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian defector from ISIS who joined as a teenager. He was repulsed by sexual practices of the group.

ICSVE, "Aiming for Paradise with the Cubs of the Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [14 June 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TX22Yce7Px0&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 15 June 2018].

Video is 5:15. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian defector from ISIS who joined as a teenager. He tells of his experiences with the Cubs of the Caliphate. This is one of the best videos for explaining the grooming practices of ISIS.

ICSVE, "Joining the Cubs of the Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [15 June 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdOXnxnLkp0&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 16 June 2018].

Video is 4:39. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian defector from ISIS who joined as a teenager. He tells of his experiences with the Cubs of the Caliphate and the connection between the cubs and foreign fighters.

ICSVE, "Haram in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [15 June 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0zyzizuoS8&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 18 June 2018].

Video is 4:36. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian defector from ISIS who had been an ISIS commander.

ICSVE, "The Call of Duty," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [16 June 2018]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51uV\\_q4s598&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51uV_q4s598&feature=youtu.be) [accessed 19 June 2018].

Video is 5:59. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Kosovar who joined the fight in Syria, but returned disaffected by the experience.

ICSVE, "A Baghdad Bombing by the Islamic state," *International Center for the Study of Violent*

*Extremism* [20 June 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HybMklYkQ&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 1 July 2018].

Video is 4:57. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of an Iraqi father who is imprisoned for supporting ISIS. He now negatively reflects on his support of the group.

ICSVE, "The Good Caliph of the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [23 June 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8ZqswygSP8&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 5 July 2018].

Video is 2:49. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian ISIS commander who defected to Turkey. This counter narrative highlights the greed of ISIS leaders.

ICSVE, "The Sword of the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [3 July 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUcn9uHrOM&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 4 July 2018].

Video is 5:18. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian ISIS commander who defected to Turkey. He reflects on the deceit associated with ISIS motivations.

ICSVE, "Following Shariah in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [3 July 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8RIzuRPgpl&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 9 July 2018].

Video is 4:15. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian ISIS commander who defected to Turkey. He discusses the failure to follow shariah with specific example of adultery.

ICSVE, "The Long Arm of the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [6 July 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U7uDhtK0DDU&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 9 July 2018].

Video is 5:19. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian ISIS commander who defected to Turkey and his concerns about the ability of ISIS assassins to reach him and his family.

ICSVE, "Making Money in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [5 July 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfuZzCQOCsw&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 15 July 2018].

Video is 3:43. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian ISIS commander who defected to Turkey and his concerns about the hypocrisy of ISIS to deal with the Syrian regime to gain money through selling grain and other business practices.

ICSVE, "Surviving in the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [15 July 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4L6VmrlRx8&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 17 July 2018].

Video is 3:24. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian ISIS commander who defected to Turkey and his concerns about how ISIS manipulated basic subsistence item prices through inflated salaries to its own fighters. This challenges the notion of ISIS as a benevolent state.

ICSVE, "Swearing my Bayat to the Islamic State in a Time of Sectarianism," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [19 July 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4L6VmrlRx8&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 17 July 2018].

Video is 3:09. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of an Iraqi ISIS member who explains that the argument for joining ISIS was based on sectarian fears



and the need to protect family and community.

ICSVE, "Jihad is our Way," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [28 July 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQFJhnuftU&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 31 July 2018].

Video is 3:22. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Kenyan who wanted to be a suicide bomber.

ICSVE, "The Lion and the Lioness of the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [28 July 2018]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2S0XrvNihEg&list=PLqpy96DXqN-dK01K\\_FikteDoSxScG\\_OT0&index=52&t=2s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2S0XrvNihEg&list=PLqpy96DXqN-dK01K_FikteDoSxScG_OT0&index=52&t=2s) [accessed 2 August 2018].

Video is 4:56. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video "highlights the dangers of online radicalization and of developing relationships with violent extremists over the Internet."

ICSVE, "Alexis the Belgian Jihadist," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [1 August 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ft8JcJmKYzc> [accessed 7 August 2018].

Video is 6:07. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Belgian man who converted and was stopped from making it to Syria. He still maintains strong opinions, but expresses that extremist videos have a dangerous impact.

ICSVE, "You Must Join the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [14 August 2018]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gh9eaFwasms&index=52&list=PLqpy96DXqN-dK01K\\_FikteDoSxScG\\_OT0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gh9eaFwasms&index=52&list=PLqpy96DXqN-dK01K_FikteDoSxScG_OT0) [accessed 18 August 2018].

Video is 4:12. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with an Iraqi who joined ISIS because of family pressure.

ICSVE, "Swearing my Bayat to the Islamic State in Fallujah," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [22 August 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pl9hdDRDvGk> [accessed 30 August 2018].

Video is 3:59. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with an Iraqi who joined ISIS because of family pressure and his explanation of the influence of Camp Bucca as a developmental area for ISIS.

ICSVE, "The People Live in Darkness," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [12 September 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NyVdt1Jf8FI&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 6 February 2019].

Video is 2:42. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with an Syrian ISIS soldier discussing the nature of compelling young men to fight.

ICSVE, "Striking It Rich in the Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [2 October 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FA4kaoEJb-Q&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 17 October 2018].

Video is 2:22. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a former ISIS commander and addresses how ISIS coerced and extorted money.

ICSVE, "A Belgian Serving the Islamic State in Syria," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [2 October 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQ3FICdC-oM&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 17 October 2018].

Video is 5:46. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Belgian convert to Islam who traveled to Syria to fight against the Assad government.

ICSVE 38, "Albanians in the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [12 January 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5nao8DZZlw&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 28 March 2019].

Video is 1:27. Abu Hilmi. A Kosovar national traveled to Syria because of the suffering witnessed in the

revolution against Bashar al-Assad.

ICSVE 52, "The Abu Musab al Zarqawi Cubs of the Caliphate Camp," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [18 September 2018].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=op6SPsb38SI&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 14 February 2019].

Video is 3:52. Ibn Omar. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Syrian boy who was trained as a cub of the caliphate.

ICSVE 56, "Escaping Jinn and the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [27 October 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6-ym1TvL6Y&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 21 February 2019].

Video is 5:54. Verdi Morava. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with an Albanian healer and imam who was prosecuted for terrorism and facilitating travel to Syria and ISIS.

ICSVE 59, "Should I Join al Shabaab?" *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [2 October 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SlxCvLxOYUo&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 11 February 2019].

Video is 4:08. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Kenyan woman whose husband joined al-Shabab and then was recruited by others to come to Somalia and join the group.

ICSVE 60, "Islamic State Live-Streaming in Kosovo," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [15 January 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-Ct09gm7pQ&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 11 February 2019].

Video is 6:09. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Kosovar man who traveled briefly to the Islamic States as a result of motivations created by images of Syrian suffering.

ICSVE 61, "The Sabayah of the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [28 May 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dqz9eY5Sd9c&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 31 May 2018].

Video is 3:56. Ibn Ahmed. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The story is of a Syrian man who joined ISIS after fighting in the Free Syrian Army. He described the behavior of ISIS with respect to Yazidi women.

ICSVE 62, "Listen to and Obey the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [2 October 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zm278YURq6M&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 13 February 2019].

Video is 4:29. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Syrian young man who joined ISIS and the comments include the brainwashing experienced by foreign fighters.

ICSVE 63, "The Punishments of Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [2 October 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMKwOpL7dHU&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 12 February 2019].

Video is 2:41. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Syrian young man who joined ISIS and the comments include the punishments he witnessed.

ICSVE 64, "My Path Toward Jihad," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [18 January 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQEUSMk9LOU&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 12 February 2019].

Video is 2:38. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The

video interview is with a Belgian who was recruited through internet videos.

ICSVE, "Giving the Best of Syria to the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [14 October 2018]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPbg\\_xM-zwk&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPbg_xM-zwk&feature=youtu.be) [accessed 17 October 2018].

Video is 2:59. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Syrian who joined ISIS because of the economic catastrophe that average people experienced prior to the rise of ISIS.

ICSVE 67, "The Islamic State's Roundabout of Happiness in Raqqa," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [14 October 2018].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dar74u0QvSM&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 6 February 2019].

Video is 3:50. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a former ISIS soldier from Syria and his reaction to the punishments inflicted by ISIS in Raqqa.

ICSVE 68, "A Scholar in the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [14 October 2018].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=De9o4BQ0hRQ&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 6 February 2019].

Video is 4:30. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Syrian who joined ISIS and became a member of the religious police.

ICSVE 69, "Revenge in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [17 January 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsU26WyVrkC&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 13 February 2019].

Video is 3:44. Abu Valid. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Syrian who joined ISIS after supposedly being captured and tortured by them.

ICSVE 72, "A Cub of the Caliphate's Jihad," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [21 January 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D73ltroZOxk&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 13 February 2019].

Video is 2:27. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a 15-year-old Syrian boy. He discusses how boys are convinced to be suicide bombers.

ICSVE 74, "It is Jihad," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [10 September 2018]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1198cD\\_lOg&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1198cD_lOg&feature=youtu.be) [accessed 15 February 2019].

Video is 3:24. Abu Taha. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with an Iraqi man from Mosul who joined ISIS and later felt that they were deceptive about who they were.

ICSVE 75, "Dreams of Islamic State Bombings in Baghdad," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [21 January 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAL8lB008Ro&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 12 February 2019].

Video is 4:38. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with an Iraqi driver for ISIS.

ICSVE 77, "A Belgian Family in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [21 September 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=phZsHwBzcbE&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 15 February 2019].

Video is 6:35. Salma. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Belgian woman who followed her father to the Islamic State.

ICSVE 78, "You should Fear Allah in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [22 January 2019].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGbGdG07XZo&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 12 February 2019].

Video is 5:14. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Belgian woman and wife of an ISIS fighter.

ICSVE 79, "Following my Father into the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [13 January 2019].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNxWgUGCUfk&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 26 March 2019].

Video is 4:16. Salma. A 22 year old woman who followed her father to ISIS.

ICSVE 83, "Making Hijrah to the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [16 January 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1lcyUKmS7sk&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 15 February 2019].

Video is 4:52. Beatrice. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Belgian woman convert to Islam who traveled to ISIS territory to join the caliphate.

ICSVE 105, "Applying the Law in the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [21 January 2019]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3TVjO\\_nH2Y&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3TVjO_nH2Y&feature=youtu.be) [accessed 15 February 2019].

Video is 3:28. Abu Qadir. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Syrian man who expresses the hypocritical application of Islamic law in the caliphate.

ICSVE 106, "Brothers of the Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [12 January 2019]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3TVjO\\_nH2Y&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3TVjO_nH2Y&feature=youtu.be) [accessed 15 February 2019].

Video is 5:09. Abu Qadir. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Syrian man who joined the Free Syrian Army and then was captured and forced to join ISIS with his brother.

ICSVE 108, "Interpreting Scriptures in the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [30 March 2019].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9SUwYPn8Jc&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 11 June 2019].

Video is 4:47. Abu Usama al Belgique. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Belgian man who expresses frustration with the fact that ISIS ordered the execution of Sunni Arab tribe members.

ICSVE 111, "The Helpers of the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [18 January 2019].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9ZTmYyN6eY&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 15 February 2019].

Video is 2:25. Abu Usama al Belgique. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Belgian man who expresses frustration with the fact that ISIS hardly fought the al-Assad regime.

ICSVE 112, "Seeking an Islamic Life in al Shabaab," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [4 April 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-9DN4iSHLo> [accessed 11 June 2019].

Video is 5:10. Abu Layth. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Kenyan 37-year-old man who joined after a religious conversion moment.

ICSVE 114, "If You Come to al Shabaab Your Sins Will Be Forgiven," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [5 June 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3h->

[5lr ht8&feature=youtu.be](#) [accessed 11 June 2019].

Video is 4:34. Abu Layth. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Kenyan 37-year-old man who joined to enjoy religious conversion.

ICSVE 115, "Studying the Art of War in al Shabaab," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [6 June 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUGpTPcSYZ8&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 11 June 2019].

Video is 6:02. Abu Layth. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with a Kenyan 37-year-old man who discusses the training to become a security intelligence operative in al-shabab.

ICSVE 117, "The Clear Path into the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [13 January 2019].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5O4m3t2YGA&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 19 February 2019].

Video is 6:36. Abu Ayad. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with an Iraqi 20-year-old man who joined ISIS after watching fewer than a dozen videos. He was supposedly encouraged to be a suicide bomber and refused, but he was arrested on the charge of conspiring to conduct a suicide bombing.

ICSVE 162, "The Clear Path into the Islamic State Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [1 June 2019]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OClwkzQ3\\_EY&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OClwkzQ3_EY&feature=youtu.be) [accessed 4 July 2019].

Video is 4:23. Abu Nasser. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. The video interview is with an Iraqi 18-year-old man who joined ISIS supposedly out of desperation with regard to food and basic needs.

Interview with Brigadier General Richard T. Knowles (Assistant Division Commander, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division) in CBS News Special "The Battle of the Ia Drang Valley" with Morley Safer, CBS News, 1965.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JfBLUOSNryc> [accessed 2 December 2016].

BG Knowles: I think the thing that is new is this pogo-type concept where we leap into an area and start a fight, finish it up to the best of our ability, and then jump over and latch onto another chunk of the enemy and then chew him up. You couldn't get in to this area on the ground. You just couldn't make it and you couldn't resupply. You had to have helicopters to support what we have been doing.

Morley Safer question: I am thinking of the intent of the mission. Everything we fought in the past has been to gain ground.

BG Knowles: Yes, but you know the basic mission of any military force is to destroy the enemy or his will to fight. And it's been our tradition since we were tied to the ground to translate that into terms of ground objectives, but that was never the real purpose. That would just help you achieve the end. Here we can free ourselves of those ground considerations and we go more directly for the enemy wherever he may be.

Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with Rick Leventhal in *Fox News Special Report with Brett Bair*, Fox News, 18 September 2016.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDuLiOTEUQQ> (approximately 33:30 in the episode)[accessed 24 December 2016].

PM Netanyahu: The way you fight terrorism is you fight the terrorists. You don't say 'I can't do anything because I have to defeat their ideas.' Yeah, you will defeat their ideas, but first defeat them. You didn't say 'I'll fight the Nazis by first defeating their ideas.' First you defeated them. Now, it doesn't mean that you can't have these forces of radicalism reappearing in Europe or anywhere else. Of course you can. But you have to keep weeding out these weeds. If you don't weed them out, they will overtake your garden.

Islamic State, "Clanging of the Swords, Part 1," *al-Furqan Media* [30 June 2012].

<http://jihadology.net/2012/06/30/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-clanging-of-the-swords-part-1/> [accessed 25 March 2017]. This video is



available through the Jihadology website at the current link.

This is a video of 1:03:49. This video is in Arabic. This is one of the earliest videos produced by ISIS and it shows. Much of the video is dedicated to expressing the oppression of Sunnis within Iraq. This explanation includes speeches from Iraqi politicians. In terms of pacing. It includes an explanation of an attack – an orders brief, if you will, as well as showing the actual operations. It also includes training footage.

Islamic State, “Clanging of the Swords, Part 2,” *al-Furqan Media* [16 August 2012].

<http://jihadology.net/2012/08/16/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-clanging-of-the-swords-part-2-%e2%80%b3/> [accessed 25 March 2017]. This video is available through the Jihadology website at the current link.

This is a video of 49:44. This video is in Arabic. This is early in ISIS operations and the video is much less interesting in terms of pacing. It includes an explanation of an attack – an orders brief, if you will, as well as showing the actual operations. It also includes training footage.

Islamic State, “Clanging of the Swords, Part 3 (Parts 1 and 2),” *al-Furqan Media* [11 January 2013].

<http://jihadology.net/2013/01/11/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-clanging-of-the-swords-part-3/> [accessed 25 March 2017]. This video is available through the Jihadology website at the current link.

This is a two part video of 39:18 and 41:21 each. This video is in Arabic. Also known as “The Breaking of Walls.” The video explains the expansion of ISIS and also includes numerous around the campfire discussions with ISIS fighters and action images of ISIS in contact with their enemies.

Islamic State, “Clanging of the Swords, Part 4,” *al-Furqan Media* [1 June 2014].

<http://jihadology.net/2014/05/17/al-furqan-media-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-sham-clanging-of-the-swords-part-4/> [accessed 25 March 2017]. This video is available through the Jihadology website at the current link.

This is 1:02:22 video. The beginning of the video provides statements that can help interested parties to understand the motivations of ISIS and how they interact with the public and their supporters and fighters. This is the first major release for the group and it is at the beginning of their editing skills. The material includes a great deal of the early success of ISIS. The video has English subtitles. The majority of the video includes images of ISIS killing people and blowing up things. This is disturbing and should be watched only after serious consideration.

Islamic State, “The End of Sykes-Picot,” *al-Hayat Media* [29 June 2014].

<http://jihadology.net/2014/06/29/al-%e1%b8%a5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-of-iraq-and-al-sham-the-end-of-sykes-picot/> [accessed 24 March 2017]. This video is available through the Jihadology website at the current link.

This is 15:04 video. It features a young ISIS fighter giving a tour of the Iraqi-Syrian border and expressing how the Sykes-Picot border will never be recognized by the Islamic State. This is rather boring by ISIS standards, but it features the music from the “Dawn of the Islamic State.”

Islamic State, “Media Man, You are a Mujahid Too – Wilayat Salah al-Din,” *al-Hayat Media* [27 May 2015].

<http://jihadology.net/2015/05/27/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-media-man-you-are-a-mujahid-too-wilayat-%E1%B9%A3ala%E1%B8%A5-al-din/> [accessed 23 April 2017]. This video is available through the Jihadology website at the current link.

This is 12:14 video. Arabic language. Instruction on the importance of media in the ISIS conflict model.

★ Islamic State, “And No Respite,” *al-Furqan Media* [24 November 2015].

<http://jihadology.net/2015/11/24/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-and-no-respite/> also available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ta75NNb6MQ8> [accessed 25 March 2017]. This video is available through the Jihadology website at the current link.

This is 4:13 video. Quite possibly the best communication of the ISIS narrative in four minutes. I regularly use this video to express the ISIS perspective of the fight and the alternative results of the fight. Simply stated,

this video communicates that to the hard-core believers they are on the winning side. This is not about belief, but about faith in action.

Islamic State, "The Structure of the Caliphate," *al-Furqan Media* [6 July 2016].

<http://jihadology.net/2016/07/06/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-the-structure-of-the-caliphate/> [accessed 25 March 2017]. This video is available through the Jihadology website at the current link.

This is 14:58 video. The video is a rather pedantic description of the bureaucracy through which ISIS governs its caliphate. The last two minutes are a series of images of ISIS fighters in action to include some gruesome beheading images. The video is in English throughout.

Islamic State, "We Will Surely Guide Them To Our Ways – Wilāyat Nīnawā," *al-Furqan Media* [17 May 2017]. <http://jihadology.net/2017/05/17/new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-we-will-surely-guide-them-to-our-ways-wilayat-ninawa/> [accessed 14 January 2018]. This video is available through the Jihadology website at the current link.

This is 44:40 video. The video comes as ISIS was losing much of their terrain and especially in Mosul. At about 9 minutes in we are introduced to an American ISIS fighter. He discusses and demonstrates ISIS weapons manufacturing capability. Much of the rest of the video is dedicated to this same topic with presenters from Russia and France. They also have several suicide bombers give testimony with overhead video of their strikes.

Israel Defense Forces, "Operation Good Neighbor," Israel Defense Forces [19 July 2017].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAMW3-rVeyM> [accessed 24 October 2017].

This is 3:03 video. The video shows Israel's efforts to assist Syrians struggling with medical conditions during the civil war. The video is in English or with English subtitles throughout.

- ★ Logan, Lara, "60 Minutes: The Battle for Mosul," *CBS News*, originally broadcast 6 November 2016. <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/60-minutes-battle-for-mosul-iraq-lara-logan/> [accessed 7 November 2016].

This is an excellent presentation of fighting on the approach to and slightly within Mosul. This has graphic imagery of explosions and aftermath of fighting. The video includes a CTS major who is also featured in the Vice News video on the fighting around Fallujah.

Logan, Lara, "60 Minutes: How unconventional thinking transformed a war-torn Colombia," *CBS News*, originally broadcast 11 December 2016. <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/60-minutes-colombia-after-civil-war-lara-logan/> [accessed 26 December 2016].

- ★ Long War Journal Editors, "Understanding al Qaeda through the massive trove of Osama bin Laden's files," *Long War Journal* [18 November 2017]. <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2017/11/understanding-al-qaeda-through-the-massive-trove-of-osama-bin-ladens-files.php> [accessed 21 November 2017].

This is 1:22:48 video. "The conversation featured Rukmini Callimachi, foreign correspondent with The New York Times, whose stories covering her discovery of a cache of al Qaeda documents in Mali made her a Pulitzer Prize finalist, as well as Thomas Joscelyn and Bill Roggio, FDD Senior Fellows and editors of FDD's Long War Journal, who were given an advance opportunity to preview the records, images, audio, and video files released this month by the Central Intelligence Agency. The discussion was moderated by Kimberly Dozier, Executive Editor of The Cipher Brief."

The transcript of the broadcast is at

[http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/Transcript\\_OBL\\_Nov2017.pdf](http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/Transcript_OBL_Nov2017.pdf) [accessed 21 November 2017].

Mann Scott, "Part 1 Interview with Joanne Herring from Charlie Wilson's War," Stability Institute [3 May 2014]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ro9LjWskfA> [accessed 26 July 2018].

Mann Scott, "Part 2 Interview with Joanne Herring from Charlie Wilson's War," Stability Institute [3 May

2014]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zU8ptHHHFuM> [accessed 26 July 2018].

Mann Scott, "Part 3 Interview with Joanne Herring from Charlie Wilson's War," Stability Institute [3 May 2014]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRlffVpxBW8> [accessed 26 July 2018].

Video is 22:23; 11:15; 10:02. Joanne Herring was instrumental in getting the funding for the mujahidin in Afghanistan. This is her story in three parts.

Martin, David, "60 Minutes: The Coming Swarm," CBS News, originally broadcast 8 January 2017. <http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/the-hostage-policy-the-coming-swarm-the-hunt-for-planet-nine/> [accessed 12 January 2017].

The report is about autonomous robots on the battlefield. The title refers to the most significant portion of the report which is a hundred-plus swarm of UAVs working autonomously. Little discussion of ethics, but an interesting insight into capability.

McCandless, Brit, "60 minutes Overtime: Advertising to sell peace, not products," CBS News online only, originally broadcast 11 December 2016. <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/60-minutes-colombia-advertising-to-sell-peace-not-products/> [accessed 26 December 2016].

Great report on a successful venture to get FARC guerillas to demobilize. The failure of many who watch this is to seek to take the behaviors and export them. The most important point is the research and the command of the narrative space terrain.

McCarthy, Deborah, "The Ambassador and the General: Interview with Ambassador James Jeffrey and General Lloyd Austin," Academy of Diplomacy Series [14 June 2018]. [http://hwcdn.libsyn.com/p/9/f/0/9f01452da37f7ae7/AmbassadorGeneral\\_JimLloyd.mp3?c\\_id=21376936&cs\\_id=21376936&expiration=1529165895&hwt=a4355335ba5d3a3edb4469c0779e346b](http://hwcdn.libsyn.com/p/9/f/0/9f01452da37f7ae7/AmbassadorGeneral_JimLloyd.mp3?c_id=21376936&cs_id=21376936&expiration=1529165895&hwt=a4355335ba5d3a3edb4469c0779e346b) [accessed 16 June 2018].

Audio is 33:52. This is an interview of Ambassador James Jeffrey and General Lloyd Austin. It includes a lot of back slapping and congratulatory comments as if these men were significantly successful. I have to agree that this is an excellent interview with great comments. Having served and worked directly with the embassy and the USF-I staff during the time period under discussion, I do not share the rosy presentation of teamwork between the two organizations nor the perceptions of that teamwork as expressed by Ambassador Jeffrey and GEN Austin. Regardless of personal opinion, this still provides excellent insights into the challenges of Iraq in 2010-2011.

Merriman, Helena, "What Kind of Person Becomes a Violent Jihadi?" *BBC World Service* (audio only) [23 April 2016]. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03qr716> [accessed 28 December 2016].

Provides empathy for the reasoning behind jihadi actions. About 23 minutes.

Open Publications, "Memetic Warfare," Open Perspectives Exchange Network, NATO Strategic Communication Center of Excellence, Riga, Latvia, [www.openpublications.org](http://www.openpublications.org). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Kv8RT2JCs&t=33s> [accessed 16 May 2017].

Ramsay, Stuart, "Special Report: Secrets Of The IS Files Obtained By Sky News," Sky News [3 May 2016]. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJis0sCXplo&sns=em> [accessed 28 December 2016].

Excellent source of information on ISIS as updated with captured documents. About 45 minutes.

★ RFE/RL, "Drone Video Shows Devastation Of Liberated Mosul," *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty* [11 July 2017]. <https://www.rferl.org/a/drone-video-show-ruins-of-mosul/28610777.html> [accessed 12 July 2017].

This is a video lasting 2:02. Most of the video is simply the images of the destroyed city. This is powerful regarding the aftermath of the fighting.

RT, "'They slept underground': RT explores covert ISIS fortifications in liberated Syrian town (VIDEO)," *RT* [12 May 2016]. <https://www.rt.com/news/342707-isis-tunnels-bunkers-syria/> [accessed 13 May 2016].

2016].

Schick, Camilla and Tim Arango, "Iraq's Hardball Tactics to Root Out ISIS," *The New York Times* [24 July 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bUchdlhbQc0> [accessed 8 October 2017].

This is a video lasting 4:12. This includes some graphic coverage of Iraqi military atrocities. The video asks some hard questions about how the effort to find ISIS may poison a future environment in Iraq.

Solomon, Ben C. and Ben Laffin, "Inside ISIS's Former Capital: The Forgotten People of Raqqa | The Dispatch," *The New York Times* and *The Dispatch* [1 April 2019].

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00\\_pMI9SSs0&t=9s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00_pMI9SSs0&t=9s) [accessed 6 August 2019] and <https://www.nytimes.com/video/world/middleeast/100000006416068/isis-syria-raqqa.html> [accessed 6 August 2019].

This is a video lasting 4:47. The opening couple of minutes provides excellent imagery of the destruction of Raqqa. The interview material is more emotional than informative. Horrible things have and did happen in Raqqa. Obviously. The video does not provide analysis and limited information.

SouthFront, "Syrian War Report – September 8, 2017: US-led Coalition Rescues ISIS Commanders From Deir Ezzor?" *South Front* [8 September 2017]. <https://southfront.org/syrian-war-report-september-8-2017-us-led-coalition-rescues-isis-commanders-from-deir-ezzor/> [accessed 12 September 2017].

This is a video lasting 3:24. It is uncertain the actual funding source for South Front, but based on the quoted sourcing it seems that it may be funded or produced through Russian support. Some descriptions say the site is funded solely through crowdsourcing and exists to present alternative views.

This presentation is an example of "evidence" demonstrating US operational support of ISIS.

Speckhard, Anne, "The Glorious Martyrs of the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [4 July 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZLKL74JE0> [accessed 19 July 2017].

Video is 5:29. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector who was recruited through local education programs after ISIS occupied his village.

Speckhard, Anne, "The Knights of the Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [7 July 2017]. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFMUgk\\_t1XA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFMUgk_t1XA) [accessed 19 July 2017].

Video is 7:28. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from a former emir in charge of media operations south of Baghdad.

Speckhard, Anne, "My Brother in the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [8 September 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-8H0myIfyM> [accessed 12 September 2017].

Video is 5:14. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from a ISIS participant.

Speckhard, Anne, "Dreams of the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [18 September 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7UYUkZzqYE> [accessed 19 September 2017].

Video is 5:36. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector who was formerly a cub of the caliphate. The audio is Arabic with English subtitles.

Speckhard, Anne, "My Brother, the Martyr for Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [19 September 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xnyqkn1no4k> [accessed 21 September 2017].

Video is 5:17. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector whose brother died in a martyrdom operation. The audio is Arabic

with English subtitles.

Speckhard, Anne, "Muslims Are Killing Their Brothers in Islam," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [19 September 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0nSEHu-qNk> [accessed 21 September 2017].

Video is 2:39. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector. The audio is Arabic with English subtitles.

Speckhard, Anne, "ISIS in al Shadadi," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [19 September 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0nSEHu-qNk> [accessed 21 September 2017].

Video is 3:30. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector regarding the rape, condemnation, stoning, and crucifixion of a woman. The audio is Arabic with English subtitles.

Speckhard, Anne, "You Blow Yourself Up," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [19 September 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2uet410mig> [accessed 23 September 2017].

Video is 2:45. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector regarding the recruitment and employment of suicide bombers. The audio is Arabic with English subtitles.

Speckhard, Anne, "Joining Islamic States for the Sake of Martyrdom," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [9 October 2017].

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ag50lbfIXnU&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 12 October 2017].

Video is 5:30. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector on why he joined ISIS.

Speckhard, Anne, "Establishing an Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [30 December 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eT4GXzpXsNc&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 2 January 2018].

Video is 6:10. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector on why he joined ISIS and the results of that association.

Speckhard, Anne, "Promises of the Caliphate," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [5 February 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKMgLS6vbw0&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 15 February 2018].

Video is 6:22. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an ISIS defector on why he joined ISIS and the results of that association. This interview includes statements regarding the deception of ISIS.

Speckhard, Anne, "Rewards of Joining the Islamic State," *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism* [14 March 2018]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kHwyGLI5JQ&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 15 March 2018].

Video is 4:06. This is produced by a group seeking to get out negative information on the Islamic State. This includes statements from an imprisoned ISIS participant who joined out of anger at Shia sectarian behavior, but who feels deep remorse at killing an innocent child with a bomb.

Stahl, Lesley, "Ex Extremist Fights Jihadist Ideology," CBS News, originally broadcast 25 April 2010. Posted on YouTube by Quilliam International on 23 September 2016.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLWVqGWpHNg> [accessed 31 October 2017].

Video is 14:24. Interview with Maajid Nawaz on 60 Minutes. He speaks of "the narrative." This is an excellent source for supporting the material included in this bibliography.

Stahl, Lesley, "60 Minutes: The Hostage Policy," CBS News, originally broadcast 8 January 2017.



<http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/the-hostage-policy-the-coming-swarm-the-hunt-for-planet-nine/> [accessed 12 January 2017].

Interview with the Sotloff family to put a personal face on the quandary associated with US policy to not negotiate for the release of hostages. This is emotional and moving though there is only a brief addressing of the national interests from the Obama administration official responsible.

Tamayo, Bala, "Battle of Marawi," Special Operations Command (SOCOM) - Philippine Army [28 November 2017]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zXI0X8Brc&t=392s> [accessed 5 December 2017].

This is a production of the Philippine Army on the fighting in Marawi. Some of the images are graphic. The value of this is the destruction of a city claimed to be liberated. Video is 8:39.

United States Department of Defense, "Senior DOD Officials Take Questions From Reporters [about the al-Baghdadi Raid with Jonathan Rath Hoffman, assistant to the secretary of defense for public affairs, and Marine Corps Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., commander of U.S. Central Command]," U.S. Department of Defense Video [30 October 2019].

[https://cdn.dvidshub.net/media/video/1910/DOD\\_107390601/DOD\\_107390601-1920x1080-6221k.mp4](https://cdn.dvidshub.net/media/video/1910/DOD_107390601/DOD_107390601-1920x1080-6221k.mp4) [accessed 2 November 2019].

Video is 20:34. The video is GEN McKenzie explaining the raid and answering questions. He includes several video clips and still images. Most of the articles written around this time period are derived from the material in this briefing. The transcript is in the entry below.

United States Department of Defense, "Senior DOD Officials Take Questions From Reporters [about the al-Baghdadi Raid with Jonathan Rath Hoffman, assistant to the secretary of defense for public affairs, and Marine Corps Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., commander of U.S. Central Command]," U.S. Department of Defense Transcript [30 October 2019].

<https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/2004092/departments-of-defense-press-briefing-by-assistant-to-the-secretary-of-defense-f/> [accessed 2 November 2019].

- ★ Vice News, "Fighting the Islamic State with Iraq's Golden Division: The Road to Fallujah," *Vice News* Video [7 June 2016]. <https://news.vice.com/video/fighting-the-islamic-state-with-iraqs-golden-division-the-road-to-fallujah> [accessed 8 June 2016].

This video is from the perspective of a Vice News reporter as he accompanies the Golden Division of the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Forces attacking toward the city of Hit in the Anbar Province of Iraq. This presents some profound points of what it means to fight ISIS. It also offers a look into the lives of Iraqis and how justice is administered under ISIS, Iraqi government, and the Popular Mobilization Forces.