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FIGHTING EXTREMISM: STRATEGIES USED TO COMBAT EXTREMISM AND  
RADICALIZATION

A Thesis  
presented in partial fulfillment of requirements  
for the degree of Master of Criminal Justice  
in the Department of Legal Studies  
The University of Mississippi

by

SCOTT M. CALDWELL

November 2012

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## ABSTRACT

Ever since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States has been awakened to the threat that extremist organizations pose to our national security. The greatest transnational terrorist threat to the United States right now comes primarily from extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah. These extremist groups are fueled by the desire to influence political, religious, and/or ideological causes. The political “end-state” or objective of the extremist is to overthrow “heretic” governments which currently exist and replace them with Islamic governments based on the rule of the Shariah (the first book of the Quran which strongly regulates all aspects of life). (Swanson, Territo, & Taylor, 2007, p. 87-89)

The purpose of this thesis is to conduct a qualitative analysis of the sources of extremism from two different perspectives (United States government and local Muslims), determine if The National Intelligence Estimate 2007 properly identifies the sources of extremism, and make recommendations on how to counter the sources of extremism/radicalization and improve security and counterterrorism strategy. The research questions which will guide this study include: What are the primary sources of Islamic Extremism; what do the prominent authors in this field of study identify as sources of extremism; what do the National Intelligence Estimate 2007 and other US government documents identify as the sources of Islamic extremism; and what does the local Muslim population identify as the sources/causes of extremism?

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

Ever since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States has been awakened to the threat that Islamic extremist organizations pose to our national security. The greatest transnational terrorist threat to the United States right now comes primarily from extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah. This form of terrorism is fueled by the desire to influence political, religious, and/or ideological causes. The political “end-state” or objective of the extremist is to overthrow “heretic” governments which currently exist and replace them with Islamic governments based on the rule of the Shariah (the first book of the Koran which strongly regulates all aspects of life). (Swanson, Territo, & Taylor, 2007, p. 87-89)

Historically, this conflict can be traced back to the establishment of Israel in 1948 and the subsequent support given to Israel by the United States. In recent years, the extremist groups have grown in number and have increased their efforts. The most significant attacks against the United States during the past ten years have been led by fundamentalist extremist groups acting from remote locations such as Afghanistan, Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq, and Iran. Extremism remains a clear and present threat to United States national security due to its recent history of attacks, its increasing ability to radicalize moderate Muslims living within the United States resulting in an ever expanding internal threat of “homegrown” terrorists, and the religious devotion to their goal resulting in their refusal to negotiate or accept anything less than the complete and utter destruction of their enemies.

## Statement of the Problem

The first attack within the United States connected with Islam and extremism was the first bombing of the World Trade Center – February 26<sup>th</sup>, 1993, which killed 5 people. During the ensuing investigation, several links were identified with fundamentalist groups in Egypt and resulted in indictments of Arab nationals living within the United States. One of those responsible was a blind Sheik named Abdul Omar Rahman who was both a spiritual leader and scholar. In 1980, two out of 64 groups were categorized as largely religious in motivation, but by 1995 almost half of the identified groups, 26 out of 56, were classified as religiously motivated; the majority of these groups espoused Islam as their guiding force. (Moore, 2001, p. 1)

Some characteristics that all terrorist organizations have in common are: They are political in their aims and motives; they use violence or the threat of violence in pursuit of their goals/objectives; and their actions are designed to have far reaching psychological repercussions beyond the immediate victim or target (having long lasting second and third order effects). (Howard, Sawyer, Bajema, 2008, pg. 33) The overall results of a terrorist attack are also similar: The loss of faith in social and governmental structure; safety and security are compromised and questioned; and the terrorist attack destroys solidarity, cooperation and interdependence on which social functioning is based and substitutes instead insecurity and distrust. (Swanson, et al, 2007, pg. 85)

The most popular transnational terrorist threat currently facing the United States is Al-Qaeda. According to the July 2007 National Intelligence Estimate,

“The main threat comes from Islamic terrorist groups and cells, especially al-Qa’ida, driven by their undiminished intent to attack the Homeland and a continued effort by these terrorist groups to adapt and improve their capabilities. Al-Qa’ida is and will remain



the most serious terrorist threat to the Homeland, as its central leadership continues to plan high impact plots, while pushing others in extremist Sunni communities to mimic its efforts and to supplement its capabilities.” (National Intelligence Estimate, 2007, p. 6)

Al-Qaeda, which was led by Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, is a loose network of many different fundamental Islamic groups located in several different and diverse countries. Al-Qaeda’s stated goal is to “re-establish the Muslim state throughout the world via the overthrow of corrupt regimes in the Islamic world and the removal of foreign presence – primarily American and Israeli – from the Middle East.” (Moore, 2001, p. 5) Their ideology is primarily based on the writings and teachings of Sayyid Muhammad Qubt and Ibn Wahhab, early Islamic scholars who called for a violent purification movement throughout the Middle East and greater Islamic world. (Swanson, et al, 2007, p. 89) This movement is commonly referred to as “Wahhabism.” Followers of Wahhabism are fighting in a “Holy War” or “Jihad” which calls for every Muslim to join their fight against the West (United States). In 1996, Osama Bin Laden issued a declaration of war against the United States calling us the “Great Satan” and later in 1998 Bin Laden went on to state that it was the duty of all Muslims to kill United States citizens, civilian or military, and their allies. (Moore, 2001. p. 5) Since Osama Bin Laden’s declaration, Al-Qaeda has been responsible for several attacks against the United States including: the 1998 suicide bombings of United States Embassies in Kenya & Tanzania which resulted in 224 dead, the 2000 suicide bombing of the U.S.S. Cole in Yemen which killed 17 American sailors, and most recently, the September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon which resulted in more than 2,800 casualties. (Swanson, et al, 2007, p. 89)

Another Islamic terrorist group that the United States needs to be concerned with is Hamas. Hamas is the largest and most influential Palestinian militant movement today and is primarily located in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. The word “HAMAS” means “zeal” in

Arabic, but it is also an Arabic acronym for “Harakut al-Muqawama al-Islamiya” or “Islamic Resistance Movement.” Hamas is also a result of the Islamic Wahhabism movement. Sheik Ahmed Yassin, its founder and spiritual leader, was assassinated by the Israeli government on March 22, 2004 after a prayer service he was attending in a Jerusalem Mosque. (Swanson, et al, 2007, p. 93) Hamas is perhaps different from Al-Queda in that it is not only known for its violence, but also for its attempts to rebuild much of the social infrastructure within the Palestinian community. While responsible for 90% of all suicide bombings throughout Israel during the past several years, Hamas is also responsible for building new roads, schools, and other social services in the territories of the West Bank and Gaza. Hamas is responsible for the deaths of more than 500 people in more than 350 separate terrorist attacks since 1993. Hamas is known for its use of suicide bombers, but not all of their attacks utilize this tactic. (CFR Hamas, 2007)

Hezbollah, which means “Party of God,” is a terrorist organization found primarily in Lebanon, Syria, and Iran. Its mission is to develop a “Pan-Islamic” republic throughout the Middle East and is supported by religious clerics in Iran. The driving force behind this organization is the desired destruction of Israel and the liberation of Jerusalem which they feel is a religious obligation for all Muslims. Its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has effectively directed the organization since the first Israeli invasion into Lebanon in 1982 and has continued to rise in popularity among the Lebanese people. (Swanson, et al, 2007, p. 94) Hezbollah is responsible for: the 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon which killed 241 Marines, the 1985 hijacking of TWA flight 847, and the 1996 bombing of Khobar Towers Air Force Housing Complex in Khobar, Saudi Arabia which killed 19 service members and wounded an additional 374 individuals, including several local nationals. (CFR Hezbollah, 2007)

Although transnational terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah continue to pose a significant threat to United States security, a more serious threat has recently emerged. As expressed in an April 2009 article produced by the FDD's Center for Terrorism Research, "Homegrown terrorists pose a particular concern due to the increasing number of Westerners joining militant Islamic movements, and the operatives' familiarity with the societies they are targeting." (Gartenstein-Ross & Grossman, 2009, p. 11) The report identifies six indicators of Jihadist radicalization which can be observed in homegrown terrorists: The adoption of a legalistic interpretation of Islam, coming to trust only a select and ideologically rigid group of religious authorities, a perceived schism between Islam and the West, manifesting a low tolerance for perceived theological deviance, attempting to impose religious beliefs on others, and the expression of radical political views. (Gartenstein-Ross & Grossman, 2009, p. 18) According to this report, over 200 men and women born or raised in the West have either participated in or provided support for extremist terrorist plots and attacks in recent years. The report goes on to further identify four distinct phases that homegrown terrorists experience along their path to radicalization: Pre-radicalization, self-identification, indoctrination, and finally jihadization. The pre-radicalization phase consists of the period before an individual begins their journey towards extremism and is followed by the self-identification phase which consists of the individual beginning to explore Salafi Islam and accepting a more extremist view of Islam. The third step in the radicalization process involves "indoctrination" where the individual's radical beliefs are intensified and the individual "wholly adopts Jihadi-Salafi ideology and concludes, without question, that the conditions and circumstances exist where action is required to support and further the Salafist cause. That action is militant Jihad." (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p. 36) The final phase of the radicalization process is "Jihadization" and involves the individual's

acceptance of their duty to participate in Jihad and proclaim themselves as holy warriors or mujahedeen. (Gartenstein-Ross & Grossman, 2009, p. 22)

Examples of this radicalization process within the United States include: The Lackawana Six, The Portland Seven, and The Northern Virginia Paintball as well as individual homegrown cases such as John Walker Lindh, Adam Gadahn, and Daniel Joseph Maldonado. The July 2007 National Intelligence Estimate also assesses that,

“The spread of radical – especially Salafi - Internet sites, increasingly aggressive anti-US rhetoric and actions, and the growing number of radical, self-generating cells in Western countries indicate that the radical and violent segment of the West’s Muslim population is expanding, including the United States.” (National Intelligence Estimate, 2007)

The intelligence estimate goes on to state that the arrest and prosecution of a small number of violent extremists within the United States points to the possibility that others are likely to follow the radicalization process and conclude that the use of violence here in the United States is both legitimate and warranted. This argument is echoed in the 2007 Council on Foreign Relations which states, “Experts say it is quite likely the next terrorist attack in the United States will not be the work of well-trained al-Queda operatives sent from abroad, but rather that of an American citizen.” (CFR American Muslims, 2007)

Although the majority of the homegrown terrorists identified in the United States have been radicalized Muslims, the United States runs the risk of alienating the American Muslim community through its attempts to combat homegrown terrorism. In the case of the “Lackawana Six”, a group of Yemeni-Americans who attended a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, it was the reports of suspicion from other American Muslims within the community which led to the initial government investigation and subsequent arrest of the six men plotting an assault on Fort Dix, New Jersey. It is therefore imperative that the national strategy for combating the

radicalization process of moderate Muslims includes civic engagement efforts. (Gartenstein-Ross & Grossman, 2009, p. 59) Former Homeland Security secretary Michael Chertoff supported this technique when he stated, “An effective strategy to prevent and counter domestic radicalization requires that we not only engage these communities, but also take proactive steps to build trust and respond to issues of concern to Americans of different ethnicities, cultures, and faiths.” (Gartenstein-Ross & Grossman, 2009, p. 60)

The process of radicalization proliferates in the United States through, “The internet, certain Salafi-based NGO’s, extremist sermons/study groups, Salafi literature, jihadi videotapes, extremist-sponsored trips to radical madrassas and militant training camps abroad have served as ‘extremist incubators’ for young, susceptible Muslims.” (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p. 82-83) To effectively combat this process, the United States must rely on moderate Muslim clerics and the American Muslim communities to identify at-risk younger Muslims and intervene with the radicalization process prior to their adoption of a fundamentalist or Salafi-based extremist view of Islam. Unfortunately, if these young, susceptible Muslims are not identified and reached prior to their indoctrination into the Jihadi-Salafi agenda, they will most likely become a highly dangerous threat.

### Timeline of Recent Radical Extremist Significant Events:

Below is a current timeline or recent history of Radical Extremist organizations and significant international events:

1979 (Feb) Ayatollah Khomeini established the Islamic Republic of Iran; United States seen as a potential enemy of Islam and as being intrusive in Islamic affairs

1983 (Apr) Bombing of US Embassy in Beirut; demonstrates the effectiveness of violence

1983 (Oct) Bombing of US Marine barracks in Beirut

1985 (Oct) Achille Lauro hijacking in eastern Mediterranean

1989 (Feb) Last Soviet forces withdraw from Afghanistan; demonstrates the weakness of other Western Cultures and the ability of Islamic forces to win against a military super power

1991 (Feb) Defeat of Saddam Hussein in Gulf War; demonstration of the United States willingness to wage war against an Islamic State

1991 (Dec) Collapse of Soviet Union

1993 (Feb) Omar Abdel Rahman, blind Egyptian sheik, helped guide and execute the First World Trade Center bombing; demonstrates the United States vulnerability to terrorist attacks

1993 (Oct) Battle of Mogadishu, Somalia

1996 (Jun) Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia

1996 (Aug) Usama bin Laden issues fatwa *Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places*

1998 (Feb) Usama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, et al. issue *World Islamic Front Declaration of Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders*

1998 (Aug) US Embassy Bombings in Tanzania and Kenya

2000 (Oct) USS Cole bombed in Yemeni port

2001 (Jun) Al-Qaida and Egyptian Islamic Jihad complete merger

2001 (Sep) 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the US

2001 (Oct) Start of war in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom)

2001 (Dec) Zawahiri publishes AQ manifesto *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*

2002 (July) Egyptian gunman kills two Israelis and injures four at the El Al ticket counter at the Los Angeles International Airport

2002 (Oct) Usama bin Laden releases letter *To the Americans*

2003 (Mar) Start of war in Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom)

2003 (Dec) Two assassination attempts against Pakistani President Musharraf

2004 (Mar) Madrid train bombings

2005 (Jul) London public transportation system bombings

2006 (Mar) Man drives vehicle into pedestrians injuring nine at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, NC

2006 (Jun) Al-Qaida in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi killed in Iraq

2006 (Aug) British foil alleged plot to detonate explosives on planes mid-flight to US

2009 (Jun) Army Private William Long killed and two others injured in a shooting attack at the Army Navy Career Center, Little Rock, Arkansas.

2009 (Nov) MAJ Nidal Hassan kills thirteen and injures another 30 at the Fort Hood Soldier Readiness Center in Ft. Hood, TX.

2009 (Dec) Yemini terrorist attempts to detonate a bomb on a flight from Amsterdam to Detroit but the bomb only ignites; passengers and crew subdue the terrorist.

2011 (2 May) Osama Bin Laden killed in Pakistan by American military forces.

2012 (11 SEP) Attack on U. S. Consulate in Benghazi, which resulted in the death of Ambassador Chris Stevens, and three other Americans.

This study will consist of a policy analysis aimed at identifying the critical elements from the current strategy which may be utilized to combat the extremist threat our nation is facing.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this thesis is to conduct a qualitative analysis of the sources of extremism from two different perspectives (US government and local moderate Muslims), determine if *The National Intelligence Estimate 2007* properly identifies the sources of Islamic extremism, and make recommendations on how to counter the sources of extremism/radicalization and improve US security and counterterrorism strategy. The sample size for this study is small and far from being representative of the United States as a whole, but is intended to be suggestive in nature rather than probative. The research questions which will guide this study include a primary research question and three secondary research questions.

### **Research Questions**

The primary research question this thesis seeks to answer is:

1. What are the primary sources of Extremism?

In order to answer the primary question, secondary questions are needed to provide a complete review of the topic. Secondary questions include:

2. What do the leading authors and so called “experts” say are the sources of extremism?
3. What do US government documents identify as the sources of extremism?
4. What does the local Moderate Muslim population identify as the sources/causes of extremism?



### **Limitations and Assumptions**

This study assumes that the participants surveyed answered honestly. The sample consists of members of a local Muslim community. However, in qualitative research, assumptions may also constitute a limitation. This study cannot determine the absolute truthfulness of the participants. Despite the assurance of confidentiality, the members of the local community may alter their responses to avoid any perceived repercussions or negative judgments that may result from the study. Identifying oneself as being anti-Israel or anti-Jewish could invite attack from militant Jewish groups. Similarly, expressing antagonism towards American policy could be perceived by some American zealots as being anti-American and as a result lead to discrimination or anti-Islamic violence. Furthermore, generalizations of the findings are limited because participants were selected from one particular Islamic Mosque in Mississippi and because of the qualitative nature of the research. The findings should not be deemed representative of the entire American Muslim community. Moreover, due to the lack of research, it is difficult for this study to compliment previous research.

The methodology of this study utilizes a purposeful and convenient sample of individuals. The sample of the local Muslim community will be used because they are easily identifiable as members of the Muslim population and are easily accessible. This particular method of sampling potentially includes biases and opinions that are not representative of the larger Muslim population of the United States. Potential flaws and limitations are inherent in particular instruments creating reason to be skeptical of the findings. However, the present research is intended to serve as a basis for further research. This study will aim to explore the perceptions of the participants because their opinion is important in the analysis of the current national strategy. The collective opinion of the local Muslim community could also serve as a

counter argument to the information provided in many of the literary sources which examine the Islamic community and which have served as a literary background to this study.

The researcher attempted to mitigate the potential problems of the study by providing the participants an Information Letter that detailed the researcher's intention to protect confidentiality and verifies voluntary participation. The researcher believes this will increase honesty among the participants. The researcher also provided both open ended and closed ended questions on the survey in order to ensure clarification and additional explanation opportunities for the participants to elaborate on issues they feel were not addressed by the survey questions. The additional comments provided by the participants were reviewed for reoccurring themes and included in the final report of conclusions as additional areas to guide future research.

### Definition of Key Terms

*Apostate.* “One who has abandoned their religious faith, principles or cause.” (Johnson, 2007, p

6) This term is used to describe deserters from any religion.

*Globalization.* “Process of becoming worldwide in scope.” (Johnson, 2007, p 6)

*Ideology.* “A tightly knit body of beliefs organized around a few central values; examples include communism, fascism, and variations of nationalism.” (Kilroy, 2007, p 212)

*Irredentist Islamic extremist.* “Subset of Islamic extremism; seeks to regain land ruled by non-Muslims or under occupation.” (Johnson, 2007, p 7)

*Islamic extremism.* “Individuals committed to restructuring political society in accordance with their vision of Islamic law and willing to use violence to achieve their goals; three types: irredentist, nationalist and transnational.” (Johnson, 2007, p 7)

*Islamism.* “Islamic activism; three types: political, missionary and extremist.” (Johnson, 2007, p 7)

*Islamist.* “Islamists are revolutionary in outlook, extremist in behavior, totalitarian in ambition.” (Pipes, 2002, p 40)

*Jihad.* “Struggle; two types: individual internal struggle against evil and temptation, and holy war waged by Muslims against infidels.” (Johnson, 2007, p 7) This is similar to the Christian desire for piety and devotion.

*Jihadist.* “Muslim involved in a jihad (note: Islamic extremists often identify themselves as jihadists).” (Johnson, 2007, p 7)

*Militant Islam.* A utopian ideology initiated in the twentieth century, that attracts only a portion of Muslims (perhaps 10-15 percent), seeks to capture control of governments, and is nakedly aggressive toward all those who stand in its way, no matter what their faith. (Pipes, 2002, p 3)

*Nationalist Islamic Extremist.* “Subset of Islamic extremism; focus is on combating Muslim governments considered impious or apostate.” (Johnson, 2007, p 7)

*Terrorism.* “Use or threat of use of seemingly random violence against non-traditional targets in order to instill a climate of fear so that the fear will induce political acquiescence and/or a political change in favor of those instigating the violence.” (Kilroy, 2007, p 164)

*Transnational Islamic Extremist.* “Subset of Islamic extremism; focus transcends national boundaries; also called global terrorists or global jihadists.” (Johnson, 2007, p 7)

### **Summary**

This thesis presents the findings of the researcher as well as relevant and available literature. The study also examines the perceptions of the local Moderate Muslim population in regards to the current government policies governing extremism and radicalization. The findings of the survey will be analyzed and compared to the indicators of extremism and radicalization as identified by the governmental policies and other independent research as found in the literature review.

**CHAPTER 2**  
**RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

**Introduction**

The literature concerning Islamic extremism and radicalization is clear in expressing the complexity of the problem and the severity of this unique threat to the United States. This study contributes to the research by examining and describing the perceptions of the local Muslim community and comparing their perspective of the problem with the perspective obtained from the prominent literature and published governmental policies regarding extremism and radicalization. This chapter includes discussion: (a) population and sample, (b) methodology, (c) data collection and instrumentation, and (d) data analysis.

The purpose of this qualitative study will be to explore the perceptions of local moderate Muslims and how they might differ from the perceptions obtained from prominent researchers, published governmental policies, and self-proclaimed or self-evidenced extremists themselves.

The research questions which will guide this study are:

1. What are the primary sources of extremism?
2. What do the leading authors and so called “experts” say are the sources of extremism?
3. What do US government documents identify as the sources of extremism?
4. What does the local Muslim population identify as the sources/causes of extremism?

### **Population and Sample**

For the analysis of the local Moderate Muslim population, this thesis studies the responses to survey questions administered to members of the local Muslim community.

### **Data Collection and Instrumentation**

This thesis uses qualitative analysis to answer the primary and secondary research questions. Further, it also uses textual analysis (i.e., document studies) to compare and contrast data from multiple perspectives. To facilitate data reduction, data display, and drawing of conclusions, primary and secondary textual source materials will be grouped into three categories:

1. Prominent authors / Leading subject matter experts in the field
2. US government documents
3. Local Muslim perceptions

All data has been collected by the researcher. The researcher has tried to remain objective and refrain from influencing survey responses. Furthermore, the researcher has remained passive and has contributed as little as possible to the responses obtained through the distribution or administration of the survey. Qualitative data has also been obtained through semi-structured interviews with the key leaders of the local Muslim community during the course of this study. The population sample was chosen from a group of Muslims who regularly attend the local Islamic mosque Friday afternoon prayer service.

All participating surveys consisted of a cross sectional survey and additional information was obtained through one-on-one conversations with key leaders within the local Islamic community. Specifically, key leaders of the Islamic community were helpful in helping edit the questions contained within the survey to ensure that the sensitive nature of the survey questions

would not offend members of the local Muslim community. Without the support of these key leaders within the Muslim community, the survey would not have been able to be administered. Indeed, even with the support of the Islamic leadership, a majority of the Islamic community appeared to be reluctant to participate in the study. All participating individuals were asked the same closed ended questions in order to obtain quantifiable and easily coded information with an open ended section at the conclusion of the survey to capture any additional issues individuals may wish to express that were not covered in the closed ended question portion of the individual survey.

### **Data Analysis**

This study assembles a body of primary and secondary source materials. The source material will be divided into three groups: (1) Prominent leading authors in the field of study or leading subject matter experts, (2) United States governmental policies and other governmental supporting documents, (3) Results obtained through the analysis of surveys administered to local moderate Muslims and key Islamic leaders within the local area, which make up the three perspectives from which to compare and contrast data.

Initially, a copy of the research proposal was sent to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to review the intended research to ensure safety of the participants. The researcher also provided the IRB with the purpose of the research, the intended sample, the methodology, and the potential risks involved for the participants. Further, the IRB was provided with information describing how confidentiality will be maintained and a copy of the Informed Consent Form (later to be titled Information Letter) which was given to each individual prior to participating in the study.

Upon approval of the IRB, individual surveys and informal interviews were conducted. Each survey was analyzed and examined for re-occurring themes. The researcher then identified common themes which emerged from the data (surveys and interviews). Further, to ensure consistency of analyzing the data, the findings were imported into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that will enable the researcher to organize the survey results in order to identify patterns.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

Extremism continues to be an ever present threat to our nation's security and the United States must increase its efforts to diminish the ability of Jihadist groups such as Al-Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah from recruiting new militant members in the U.S. who are willing to attack their own nation. In order to prevent moderate Muslims from radicalizing, it is important to involve senior leaders within the Muslim community. The U.S. must be careful not to alienate or discriminate against the American Muslim community because they are the best eyes and ears our nation has for identifying at-risk moderate Muslims recruited for Jihad. Local police forces will need to be vigilant in practicing good community policing and also using intelligence gathered from the senior Muslim leaders to help maintain good situational awareness of potential Muslim fundamentalist groups that are hostile to the U.S. and might be forming within their local communities. Without these vitally important relations with the American Muslim community, the U.S. will continue to be subjected to extremist terrorist attacks. This chapter presents a review of the literary sources used during this study and the different sources of extremism proposed by each in order to answer the secondary research questions. Once this information has been examined, the thesis should have a solid foundation and be better able to answer the primary research question: What are the primary sources of extremism?

### **Prominent Authors on Extremism**

Bruce Hoffman provided a clear explanation of the unique challenges that extremist terrorism presents to the U.S. when he identified three key differences between Islamic terrorism and other secular forms of terrorism. First, Islamic extremists reject all contemporary ideologies and see themselves as outsiders with no option but to resort to militant Jihad. Next, as Jihadists fighting a holy war, total victory can only be obtained through the total destruction of the enemies of Allah and a return to an Islamic state governed by the rule of Shariah. Finally, Islamic extremists believe that to kill the enemies of Allah and to offer the infidels the choice between converting to Islam or being put to death is the duty of every individual believer as well as the task of the Islamic state. (Hoffman, 1993, pg. 4) With this view of the extremists' religious dedication and willingness to die for one's religious conviction, there is no easy end to this ever increasing threat to U.S. security.

Daniel Pipes, in his book *Militant Islam Reaches America*, argued that although a large percentage of the population (both Muslim and Christian) believe that militant Islam is a result of economic stress and poverty, such an explanation must be ruled out and the real cause of militant Islam must be found in some other variable. Mr. Pipes supported his argument by examining the backgrounds of the nineteen suicide hijackers involved in the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. The backgrounds of those terrorists included, "money, education, and privilege." (Pipes, 2002, pg. xiv) Mr. Pipes goes on to further examine the life of John Walker Lindh who he described as a "young son of privilege who joined the Taliban in Afghanistan and charged with providing material support and resources to a foreign terrorist organization." (Pipes, 2002, pg. xvi) The author also addressed the difficult issue that governments have in formulating a policy on what at first appears to be a religion. In order to help clarify the issue, Mr. Pipes drew a clear

distinction between Islam, a religion, and militant Islam, a political ideology that he compared with fascism and Marxism-Leninism. (Pipes, 2002, pg. 47) Mr. Pipes goes on to express that the U.S. government has an important, but difficult task in, “severing the common association Americans make between Islam and terrorism. Officialdom does not deny that seemingly devout Muslims are constantly trying to kill Americans, but it vociferously denies their connection to Islam.” (Pipes, 2002, pg. 95)

The determination of the extremist is further expressed by a number of Shi’a theologians. For example, Ayatollah Baqer al-Sadr wrote, “We have two choices: either to accept it with submission, which means letting Islam die, or destroy it, so that we can construct the world as Islam requires.” (Hoffman, 1993, pg. 5) Perhaps the most alarming message of the extremist’s intent was expressed by Hussein Mussawi, the former leader of Lebanon’s Hezbollah, when he stated, “We are not fighting so that the enemy recognizes us and offers us something. We are fighting to wipe out the enemy.” (Hoffman, 1993, pg. 5) This devout determination in the pursuit of their goal causes the extremist to be the most deadly and difficult threat to guard against and defeat. The issue was best explained by Mr. Bruce Hoffman when he stated,

“The volatile combination of religion and terrorism has been cited as one of the main reasons for terrorism’s increased lethality. The fact that for the religious terrorist violence inevitably assumes a transcendent purpose and therefore becomes a sacramental or divine duty arguably results in a significant loosening of the constraints on the commission of mass murder. Religion, moreover, functions as a legitimizing force, sanctioning if not encouraging wide scale violence against an almost open-ended category of opponents.” (Hoffman, 1993, pg. 12)

In short, the goal of an Islamist is not to achieve an acceptable coexistence with the enemy, but the complete and utter annihilation of the enemy.

Mark A. Gabriel's book, *Islam and Terrorism*, portrays the Islamic faith, and more specifically the Islamic view of Jihad, as only a former cleric and professor of Islamic History can. Dr. Gabriel offers valuable insight into not only the Islamic religion, but also the Muslim culture in an attempt to explain the motives and goals of Islamic extremist groups. Furthermore, Dr. Gabriel's experience as both a professor of Islamic history and an Imam of a local mosque (similar to a pastor of a Christian Church) gives a unique and personal account of the struggles he had with trying to reconcile the loving, peaceful, forgiving, and compassionate Islam that he was instructed to teach with the "true" Islam that he was familiar with from his study of the Quran. (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 2-4) During a Friday Islamic teaching at a local mosque in Giza, Egypt to a group of about two hundred and fifty Muslims, Dr Gabriel delivered the following message,

"Jihad in Islam is defending the Islamic nation and Islam against the attacks of the enemies. Islam is a religion of peace and only will fight against one who fights it. These infidels, heathens, perverts, Christians and Allah's grievors, the Jews, out of envy of peaceful Islam and its prophet – they spread the myth that Islam is promulgated by the sword and violence. These infidels, the accusers of Islam, do not acknowledge Allah's words."  
(Gabriel, 2002, pg. 1)

This message caused an internal conflict within Dr. Gabriel because he had studied the Quran for years at Al-Azhar University and was instructed to focus on the politically correct Islam and purposely overlook the areas of Islamic teaching that conflicted with the authority of Egypt. (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 2) This "politically correct" version of Islam did not coincide with the Islam he had studied. What confused him most was that while he was being instructed to teach a politically correct version of Islam, Muslim fundamentalists, who were practicing true Islam, were bombing churches and killing Christians. Dr. Gabriel goes on to claim,

“Allah, the god revealed in the Quran, is not a loving father. It says that he desires to lead people astray (Surah 6:39, 126). He does not help those who are led astray by him (Surah 30:29) and desires to use them to populate hell (Surah 32:13) Islam is full of discrimination – against women, against non-Muslims, against Christians, and most especially against Jews. Hatred is built into the religion.” (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 5)

As Dr. Gabriel struggled to understand the reasons for the two separate messages, he questioned a well-known Islamic cleric, Omar Abdel Rahman (the spiritual leader of the radical Egyptian group al-Jihad which carried out the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat), about the verses in the Quran that talk about love, peace, and forgiveness. Omar Abdel Rahman replied, “there is a whole surah (chapter) called ‘Spoils of War.’ There is no surah called ‘Peace.’ Jihad and killing are the head of Islam. If you take them out, you cut off the head of Islam.” (Gabriel, 2002. pg. 24)

Dr. Gabriel explains to his reader that Islam is a religion of works. That is, entrance into Paradise (Heaven) must be earned. According to the Islamic faith, when judgment day comes, Allah weighs the good works and the bad works in order to determine their fate. “Then as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be heavy, he will live a pleasant life (in Paradise). But as for him whose balance (of good deeds) be light, he will have his home in Hawiyah (pit, i.e., Hell)” – Surah 101:6-9. (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 27) This differs significantly from the Christian faith where one receives salvation through the acceptance of Jesus Christ and cannot earn God’s grace through works or deeds, but rather through faith. This fundamental difference is key to understanding a Muslim’s willingness to fight Jihad or, more specifically, accept a suicide mission that will certainly result in his/her death. Dr. Gabriel explains, “the only way for a Muslim to ensure that he will get into Paradise is to die in Jihad – to die while fighting the enemy of Islam.” (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 28) Jihad is further explained as fighting anybody who

stands in the way of spreading Islam or fighting anyone who refuses to enter (submit) to Islam (based on Surah 8:39) (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 28)

The question still remains, “What about the Quranic verses that speak of love, peace, and forgiveness?” Dr. Gabriel responds to this question by explaining to the reader the Islamic concept of “Nasikh.” The principle of Nasikh is based on the fact that the Quran was revealed to Muhammad at different times throughout his life. Over a period of about twenty-two years, the prophet Muhammad traveled from Mecca to Medina and the Quran is a result of the revelations he received during this time period. The prophet Muhammad had a significantly different experience in Mecca than he did while he was in Medina. Muhammad’s life in Mecca was all about prayers and meditation. Therefore, the Quranic verses written while Muhammad was in Mecca are about peace and cooperation with others. While in Medina, Muhammad became a military leader and invader. Therefore, the revelations in Medina talk about military power and invasion in the name of Islam (Jihad). (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 31) The earlier, more peaceful and loving verses of the Quran which were written while the prophet was in Mecca, were superseded by more violent and militant verses which were written while Muhammad was in Medina. The process of replacing the older verses with the more recent ones is known as the principle of Nasikh.

Dr. Gabriel goes on to clarify for the reader that the ultimate goal of Islam is Jihad. Jihad is carried out in order to establish Islamic authority over the whole world. Dr. Gabriel further explains that Islam is not just a religion, it is a government as well. (Gabriel, 2002 pg. 37) With this as the ultimate goal of Islam, one has to ask, “Why then are not all Muslims fighting this Jihad?” Dr. Gabriel offers an explanation for this question by identifying three types of Muslims: Secular Muslims, Traditional Muslims, and Fundamentalist Muslims. Dr. Gabriel

describes the secular Muslims by stating that they “believe in the nice parts of Islam, but reject the call of Jihad. They take on the cultural trappings of the message, but they are not living it out completely.” Dr. Gabriel describes the Traditional Muslims as those who “study, believe, and practice Islam, but consider Jihad to be a spiritual battle or simply do not take action because they do not have the ability, they are concerned with their families, or they want to live a nice life on earth instead of dying.” Finally, Dr. Gabriel describes the Fundamentalist Muslims as the Muslim extremists who perpetrate terrorism and their goal is, “to practice Islam as Muhammad did; they are practicing ‘true’ Islam.” (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 39)

Certain key verses from the Quran help to identify and demonstrate the violent nature of Islamic Jihad. For example, Surah 9:5 states:

“Fight and slay the Pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war); but if they repent, and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity, then open the way for them: for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 30)

Other verses from the Quran that demonstrate this violent aspect of the Islamic faith include Surah 4:89 which proclaims, “Those who reject Islam must be killed. If they turn back (from Islam), take (hold of) them and kill them wherever you find them...” (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 33) Another verse which offers proof of violence in the Quran is Surah 8:59-60 which emphasizes, “Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies, of Allah and your enemies, and others besides, whom you may not know, but whom Allah knows.” (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 34) It is interesting that this particular verse contains a clear reference to the intent of Islamic Jihad to “strike terror into the hearts of the enemies.” This pattern of violent scripture is seen again in Surah 8:39 which states, “And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and polytheism,

i.e., worshipping others besides Allah) and the religion (worship) will be for Allah Alone [in the whole of the world]. But if they cease (worshipping others besides Allah), then certainly, Allah is All-Seer of what they do.” (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 35) Finally, Muhammad’s instructions for waging Jihad and against whom this holy war should be directed are clearly found in Surah 9:29:

“Fight against those who (1) believe not in Allah, (2) nor in the last day, (3) nor forbid that which has been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad) (4) and those who acknowledge not the religion of truth (i.e. Islam) among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), until they pay the Jizyah [tax] with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued. (Gabriel, 2002, pg. 73)

These verses from the Quran provide very clear evidence of the violent nature of the Islamic faith and are intended to prove to the reader the inherent dangers of Islamic Jihad. However, are these passages significantly different from verses found in the Christian Holy Bible?

The King James Version of the Holy Bible also contains similar scriptures of a wrathful and jealous God which seem to command violent action against the enemies of the faith. For example, 2 Samuel 22:35; 38-41 reads:

“He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms....I have pursued my enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them. And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they are fallen under my feet. For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me. Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me.” (KJV, 1988, pg. 439-440)

This passage is repeated in the book of Psalms 18:34-40. Elsewhere in the Old Testament similar scriptures are found, such as Exodus 15:3 which proclaims, “The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name.” Other similar passages which refer to war against the



enemies of Israel and the complete destruction of its adversaries include Joshua 6:21, “And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.” The book of Deuteronomy echoes this theme in versus 13:15-16 and in 20:13-16. These passages are very similar to the violent messages previously mentioned from the Quran. In fact, some might argue that these versus could easily be interpreted as a “Christian” call to “Jihad.” With these similarities between the Holy Bible and the Islamic Quran, how is it that Christians are not involved in a “holy war” against the Muslims of the world? The answer is quite simple. Just as the Islamic faith has the principle of Nasikh, where older versus are superseded by more recent scripture, the Holy Bible and Christian followers understand the difference between Old Testament and New Testament passages. All of the previous examples of Biblical scripture are found in the Old Testament where the culture of Israel had to fight for its survival against numerous enemies. The clear distinction between Islam and Christianity is that Islam seems to migrate from a peaceful religion to a more violent and militant lifestyle, whereas Christianity evolves from a violent past to a peaceful, loving, and forgiving religion with the arrival of the ministry of Jesus Christ and the New Testament.

Similarities can also be observed between Islamic and Jewish terrorism. A clear example of Jewish terrorist acts include Baruch Goldstein’s assault on Ibrahim’s mosque on 25 February 1994, during the second Muslim Sabbath and Islam’s holy month of Ramadan, killing 29 and wounding 150. (Howard, Sawyer, Bajema, 2009, pg. 209) Another example of Jewish terrorism is the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by Yigal Amir, a young Jewish student, who claimed he had acted on orders of God. (Howard, et al, 2009, pg. 209) In fact, there are many similarities between the stands of the Jewish Kach and the Islamic Hamas organizations.

These similarities include: Both share a vision of a religious state between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea; both have a “xenophobia” against everything alien or secular which must be removed from the entire land (purification of the land of all things foreign or secular); both have a vehement rejection of western culture; and both rely not only on violence, but also a gradual building of an impressive constituency through a strategy of “re-Islamization” or “re-Judaization” from below. (Howard, et al, 2009, pg. 214)

Dr. Gabriel’s argument of a violent Islamic faith which calls for/demands an offensive Jihad is contrary to Magnus Ranstorp’s idea of Islam’s Jihad as a defensive doctrine. Whereas Dr. Gabriel describes an offensive Jihad aimed at the total destruction of non-Muslim states and world domination as its goal, Ranstorp argues that modern day Muslims are acting out of a sense of fear and feel threatened by the encroachment of western influence and secular governments of Christian societies, such as the U.S., into predominately Muslim lands. Ranstorp expressed this fear best when he claimed,

“The accelerated dissolution of traditional links of social and cultural cohesion within and between societies with the current globalization process, combined with the historical legacy and current conditions of political repression, economic inequality and social upheaval common among disparate religious extremist movements, have all led to an increased sense of fragility, instability, and unpredictability for the present and the future.” (Howard, et al, 2009, pg. 211)

Ranstorp further explains that not only do Islamic terrorists feel the need to preserve their religious and cultural identity, they also see this time as an opportunity to fundamentally shape the future. (Howard, et al, 2009, pg. 211) Ranstorp continues to develop the “crisis mentality” in the Islamic terrorist’s mindset by describing the problem as being “multi-faceted.” He claims that the Islamic terrorist is being affected in several areas, including the social, political, economic, cultural, psychological, and spiritual sphere. This combination of influencers results

in a sense of “spiritual fragmentation and radicalization of society and the extremist’s fear of the forced march toward one worldism.” (Howard, et al, 2009, pg. 211) Ranstorp further argues that Islam’s Jihad is essentially a defensive doctrine which is somewhat contrary to what Dr. Gabriel presents in his book, *Islam and Terrorism*. Ranstorp discusses Islam’s Jihad, which is sanctioned by leading Muslim theologians, as a fight against perceived aggressors, tyrants, and “wayward Muslims.” Ranstorp goes on to explain that in its most violent form, Jihad is “justified as a means of last resort to prevent the extinction of the distinctive identity of the Islamic community against the forces of secularism and modernism.” (Howard, et al, 2009, pg. 212) Ranstorp seems to differ with Dr. Gabriel’s assessment of the intention of Islamic Jihad by suggesting that the goal of Islamic extremists is not the establishment of a global Islamic state ruled by Quranic Muslim Law, but instead as a defensive struggle against the secular and cultural invasion of the western culture and Christian influence. Ranstorp supports this theory when he states,

“With the loss of Palestine to Zionism, Islamic extremists drew heavily on the symbolism and history of the crusades where Christianity was pitted against Islam to explain their current condition of oppression and disinheritance, and to provide a workable solution and defense against the threat of western encirclement and secularization.”  
(Howard, et al, 2009, pg. 217)

These two theories of the goal of Islamic Jihad are both credible and well supported by the two authors. The question remains, “What is the true goal of Islamic Jihad?” Is it an offensive holy war aimed at the establishment of a global Islamic state where Islamic law governs supreme? Or is it a defensive battle to protect the Islamic culture from the perceived invasion of the west and the secularization which threatens the traditional Muslim culture and Islamic way of life? The goal of Islamic Jihad is quite simply...both. Islamic extremists are concerned with protecting the heart and soul of the Islamic faith from what they perceive as an

external threat to their culture and way of life. This is the immediate short term goal of the current Islamic Jihad we are seeing today. The long term, or ultimate, goal of Jihad is the establishment of an Islamic state governed by the law prescribed within the Quran. Within this Islamic state, there is no room for secular government or independent nation states. These two viewpoints of Islamic Jihad are both mutually supportive and offer a comprehensive understanding of Islam and terrorism.

Monte Palmer and Princess Palmer also discuss the causes, diversity and challenges of dealing with extremism in their book, *Islamic Extremism*. In the first chapter of the book, the Palmers begin by trying to define the enemy in America's struggle against terrorism. The authors are quick to make the distinction that, "The jihadists might be Muslim, but few Muslims are jihadists". The authors also make a familiar statement when they point out that, "The American government denies that it is at war with Islam, but the world's Muslims remain unconvinced." (Palmer, 2008, pg. 2) The chapter goes on to state, "The Muslim world is acutely sensitive about threats to its faith regardless of their intent. Attacks on Islam, however inadvertent, strengthen the forces of Islamic extremism." (Palmer, 2008, pg. 4) The Palmers continue to discuss the modern perception of the world's Muslim community when it provided the following information in Chapter 2,

"A *Times* of London poll conducted shortly after September 11 found that approximately 11 percent of Britain's two million Muslims believed that there was some justification for Bin Laden's attacks on the United States; some 40 percent of the respondents disagreed with Bin Laden's means but agreed that his war against the United States was justified. Sixty-eight percent indicated that their faith was more important than "being British." The results were based on interviews with 1,170 Muslims conducted outside British mosques." (Palmer, 2008, pg. 23)

The discussion on the British Muslim perceptions continued with a proposed cause for extremism and the emergence of terrorist cells. Most of the research that was conducted on

causes for extremism resulted from, “Hostility toward the United States focused on American policy in the Middle East and particularly U.S. support of Israel.” (Palmer, 2008, pg. 23) This argument has been a reoccurring theme in most books published about modern terrorism and must be considered as an answer to one of the secondary research questions, “What do the leading authors identify as the sources of extremism?” To make matters worse, American efforts to “win the hearts and minds” of the Muslim community have failed miserably and in much of the world America (or at least the American government) is seen as the “bad guys” and jihadists are viewed as “freedom fighters”. (Palmer, 2008, pg. 24) It is ironic that the U.S., which claims to be the beacon of Freedom and Liberty, is being attacked by extremists who view themselves as “Freedom fighters” trying to liberate their countries from American military occupation. This issue is best illustrated when the book states:

“Americans see themselves as a fair and reasonable people who desire nothing more than freedom, justice, and prosperity for all. As the innocent victims of criminal violence, Americans believe that they are justified in striking the terrorists with maximum force. In their view, their hands are free of blood. The image of the United States that prevails in the Islamic world is radically different. Not only is the United States seen as having blood on its hands, but those hands are literally dripping in the blood of Arabs and Muslims.” (Palmer, 2008, pg. 28-29)

The authors conclude their discussion on the world’s Muslim perceptions of the United States by stating, “The United States will not be successful in countering terrorism and Islamic extremism unless it can do a better job of convincing people that America has not declared war on Islam. It would also do well to reconsider its support of oppressive regimes in the Islamic world. All fuel anti-Americanism and anti-Americanism strengthens the jihadists. (Palmer, 2008, pg. 31)

The question of how we are to deal with extremism remains. According to Philip Heymann in his book, *Terrorism and America*, there are three primary concerns for democratic

nations dealing with terrorism: the preservation of life, the preservation of liberties necessary to a vibrant society, and the maintaining of the unity of society. (Heymann, 1988, p. iv) It was interesting to note that Mr. Heymann did not list the destruction of the terrorist organization within his primary concerns. In fact, Mr. Heymann went on to argue that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's goal of, "Dealing with terrorism as unitary – the destruction of a deeply evil activity and those who practice it – and who see the primary means to that destruction as simply unleashing the security forces of a powerful state" is not the correct course of action to take. (Heymann, 1988, p. x) Mr. Heymann argued that terrorist organizations must be confronted on a political battlefield as well as incorporating a military or police action response. This argument further supported the using of civic engagements and establishing a strong cooperative relationship with senior leaders within the local Muslim communities.

## Governmental Documents

The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March 2006 (NSS) states that, “The War on Terror has been both a battle of arms and a battle of ideas – a fight against the terrorists and against their murderous ideology.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 9) This governmental document goes on to clarify that:

“While the War on Terror is a battle of ideas, it is not a battle of religions. The transnational terrorists confronting us today exploit the proud religion of Islam to serve a violent political vision: the establishment, by terrorism and subversion, of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom. These terrorists distort the idea of Jihad into a call for murder against those they regard as apostates or unbelievers – including Christians, Jews, Hindus, other religious traditions, and all Muslims who disagree with them. Indeed, most of the terrorist attacks since September 11 have occurred in Muslim countries – and most of the victims have been Muslims.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 9)

It is important to note that the National Security Strategy of 2006 stresses that the U.S. is **NOT** in a War against the religion of Islam. Unfortunately, many of the World’s Muslims do not agree. Extremist groups use the U.S. recent Foreign Policy decisions, our long history of supporting Israel, and our military involvement in the Islamic countries of Iraq and Afghanistan to argue that the U.S. **IS** at war with Islam. This is a huge problem that this country will have to address if there is any hope in winning the war on terror.

The NSS of 2006 also identifies the causes of terrorism and extremism while also identifying what does not cause individuals to join extremist organizations. First, the NSS discusses four commonly proposed sources of terrorism:

1. The inevitable by-product of poverty
2. A result of hostility to U.S. policy in Iraq
3. A result of Israeli-Palestinian issues
4. A response to our efforts to prevent terror attacks

These four “sources” of terrorism are commonly expressed as possible causes for the extremism, but the NSS of 2006 offers fairly compelling evidence that these are **NOT** part of the root cause of terrorism. The report argues that because many of the hijackers responsible for the September 11 attacks were from middle-class families, their decision to follow an extremist ideology could not be a product of poverty. The report also reminds the reader that the leader of Al-Qa’ida, Osama Bin Laden, came from a privileged upbringing which further demonstrates that poverty does not lead to extremism. The NSS of 2006 continues to point out that the U.S. has been at war with terror long before the war in Iraq and Saddam Hussein. A brief look at our nation’s recent history with terrorism will indicate that terrorism existed long before our hostility in Iraq and therefore our military action in Iraq is not a cause of extremism (although our continued military involvement in Muslim nations may provide extremist groups a source for recruiting young Muslims to participate in a defense of Islamic Holy land). While extremism pre-existed the Iraq War (and our support of the Shah of Iran), these events continue to be a cause of present and future recruiting for extremist organizations.

Next, the National Security Strategy of 2006 addresses the possibility of extremism as being a result of the never-ending Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The report does not go into much detail on this argument and only provides a short one sentence answer to this potential cause of extremism. The report states, “Al-Qaida plotting for the September 11 attacks began in the 1990’s, during an active period in the peace process.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 10) This is not sufficient evidence to discount the Israeli-Palestinian issue with the rise of extremism. The issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is addressed in several prominent authors’ books as a leading cause of extremism and it is also echoed in the survey results that will be analyzed later in this study.

The NSS of 2006 concludes its discussion of false causes of extremism by addressing the



argument that extremism is simply a response to our efforts to prevent terrorist attacks. Here again, the report uses a historic timeline to refute this cause and effect argument. The report states, “The al-Qaida network targeted the United States long before the United States targeted al-Qaida. Indeed, the terrorists are emboldened more by perceptions of weakness than by demonstrations of resolve. Terrorists lure recruits by telling them that we are decadent and easily intimidated and will retreat if attacked.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 10) This answer also demands further discussion. Extremists would, no doubt, argue that the United States was responsible for “targeting” Islamic nations by engaging in a military occupation of the Muslim Holy lands.

The NSS of 2006 does provide four alternative origins for the radicalization of an otherwise peaceful religion:

1. Political alienation
2. Grievances that can be blamed on others
3. Sub-cultures of conspiracy and misinformation
4. An ideology that justifies murder

The first cause, political alienation, argues that extremists are recruited from populations which, “Have no voice in their own government and see no legitimate way to promote change in their own country.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 10) The report states that this poor political environment causes the people of these countries to be vulnerable to manipulation by extremist groups and their violent ideology which advocates political change through violence and destruction.

The second cause, grievances that can be blamed on others, claims that, “The failures of the terrorists feel and see are blamed on others, and on perceived injustices from the recent or sometimes distant past. The terrorists’ rhetoric keeps wounds associated with this past fresh and raw, a potent motivation for revenge and terror.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 10) This argument tends to

blame extremists for “living in the past” and acting out of an emotional response to “perceived injustices.”

Next, the 2006 NSS claims that extremism stems from sub-cultures of conspiracy and misinformation. Here again, the report claims that extremist groups are made up of populations whose world view is, “Contaminated by falsehoods and corrupted by conspiracy theories.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 10) Basically, the report argues that extremist groups ignore facts that would challenge their prejudicial outlook and refuse to see things for how they are, but instead prefer to focus on popular self-serving propaganda and see the world as they wish to see it.

The final cause that the 2006 NSS claims contributes to extremism is an ideology that justifies murder. The report argues that, “Terrorism ultimately depends upon the appeal of an ideology that excuses or even glorifies the deliberate killing of innocents. A proud religion – the religion of Islam – has been twisted and made to serve an evil end, as in other times and places other religions have been similarly abused.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 10) This last cause for extremism focuses directly on the ability of the extremists to justify their violent actions with their religious views. In order for a Muslim to condone suicide attacks and the targeting of a civilian population, he/she must ascribe to an extremist ideology. Most Muslim communities and religious leaders would argue that anyone who accepts this extremist ideology is not a true Muslim; conversely, an extremist would argue that any Muslim who refuses to support the current Jihad or defense of Islam is not a true Muslim. Therefore, a primary issue within the Muslim community seems to be the question of whether or not a jihad has been declared against the U.S. and if so, whether or not they should answer the call if indeed the religion of Islam is at war with the U.S. The final question to be considered by the Islamic community is if a Jihad has been declared, what are a Muslim’s “Rules of Engagement?” Even if a Muslim is engaged in

military action in the defense of Islam, many Muslims would argue that the targeting and killing of civilians is not supported by the teachings of the Koran or Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). This would also be an important religious topic for future discussion and study.

This 2006 National Security Strategy therefore provides the answer to one of our secondary research questions by providing what the government views as the causes of extremism. The 2006 NSS argues that democracy and a well-established government will help solve these problems. As the document states, “Transnational terrorists are recruited from people who have no voice in their own government and see no legitimate way to promote change in their own country. Without a stake in the existing order, they are vulnerable to manipulation by those who advocate a perverse vision based on violence and destruction.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 10)

Once the causes of terrorism and extremism were identified, the NSS then communicated a strategy for combating these issues. According to the 2006 NSS, the key to defeating the extremists rests on the leaders of the Islamic faith.

“The strategy to counter the lies behind the terrorists’ ideology is to empower the very people the terrorists most want to exploit: the faithful followers of Islam. We will continue to support political reforms that empower peaceful Muslims to practice and interpret their faith. The most vital work will be done within the Islamic world itself, and Jordan, Morocco, and Indonesia have begun to make important strides in this effort. Responsible Islamic leaders need to denounce an ideology that distorts and exploits Islam for destructive ends and defiles a proud religion.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 11)

The National Security Strategy of the United States of America closes with a vision statement for the way forward, “The struggle against militant Islamic radicalization is the great ideological conflict of the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and finds the great powers all on the same side – opposing the terrorists.” (NSS, 2006, pg. 36)

A second governmental document, the National Intelligence Estimate, July 2007 (NIE) specifically addresses the terrorist threat to the US homeland. The NIE of 2007 anticipated a “persistent and evolving terrorist threat” with the main threat coming from “Islamic terrorist cells, especially Al-Qa’ida, driven by their undiminished intent to attack the homeland.” (NIE, 2007) The report continues by stating that Al-Qa’ida will remain the most serious threat to our nation’s security and it’s central leadership will continue to plan high impact attacks while encouraging other extremist Sunni communities to do the same. The 2007 NIE also provides a frightening picture of our current security situation when it states, “Although we have discovered only a handful of individuals in the United States with ties to Al-Qa’ida senior leadership since 9/11, we judge that Al-Qa’ida will intensify its efforts to put operatives here.” (NIE, 2007) This statement indicates that there are already foreign extremists operating within our borders and already established within our communities. How many more have entered the country since the 2007 NIE was published?

The 2007 NIE also assesses that the Lebanese Hezbollah will continue to threaten homeland security, especially if the group perceives the U.S. as posing a direct threat to Iran. Finally, the 2007 NIE concludes by stating,

“We assess that the spread of radical – especially Salafi – internet sites, increasingly aggressive anti-US rhetoric and actions, and the growing number of radical, self-generating cells in Western countries indicate that the radical and violent segment of the West’s Muslim population is expanding, including in the United States. The arrest and prosecution by US law enforcement of a small number of violent Islamic extremists inside the United States – who are becoming more connected ideologically, virtually, and/or in a physical sense to the global extremist movement – points to the possibility that others may become sufficiently radicalized that they will view the use of violence here as legitimate.” (NIE, 2007)

This closing statement clearly identifies the issue of “radicalization” of moderate Muslims to a more extremist view or ideology as a persistent threat to the U.S. homeland security. The threat

discussed here is an “internal” issue that suggests that American Muslims could be at risk of converting to a more militant strain or radical ideology of Islam. Here again it is important to acknowledge the importance of the key leadership of the Islamic community in preventing a distorted view of Islam and protecting the Islamic youth from being swayed to a violent ideology or perversion of the Islamic faith. Government intrusion into the Islamic faith will not help prevent radicalization; in fact, government intrusion can only be seen as a threat to American Muslim’s freedom of religion. The U.S. government must trust the Islamic leaders to police their own community.

Finally, the last governmental document that is included in the Literature Review is the National Security Strategy published in May 2010 (NSS, 2010). The National Security Strategy of 2010 is very different from the NSS published just four years earlier (NSS, 2006). While the 2006 NSS described our current war on terror as a “battle of ideas, not a battle of religion,” discussed the four causes of extremism, and closed by stating our current struggle against “militant Islamic radicalization” was the great conflict of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the NSS of 2010 goes one step further by not mentioning the words, “radicalization”, “Muslim”, or “Islam” even once in the entire 52 page document. The 2010 NSS identified Weapons of Mass destruction as the primary threat to the security of the U.S. where the 2006 NSS stated that terrorists and their murderous ideology presented the greatest threat. The 2010 NSS also spends a great deal of time discussing the importance of the economy, environment (climate change), and our countries dependence on fossil fuel. The 2010 NSS only briefly mentions “extremism” when it states,

“We must focus American engagement on strengthening international institutions and galvanizing the collective action that can serve common interests such as combating violent extremism; stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and securing nuclear materials; achieving balanced and sustainable economic growth; and forging cooperative solutions to the threat of climate change, armed conflict, and pandemic disease.” (NSS, 2010, pg. 3)

The 2010 NSS also acknowledges a commitment to reach a compromise in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by stating,

“We will be unwavering in our pursuit of a comprehensive peace between Israel and its neighbors, including a two-state solution that ensures Israel’s security, while fulfilling the Palestinian peoples’ legitimate aspirations for a viable state of their own. And our broader engagement with Muslim communities around the world will spur progress on critical political and security matters, while advancing partnerships on a broad range of issues based on mutual interests and mutual respect.” (NSS, 2010, pg. 4)

This new position of compromise may be received by the Islamic nations as a commitment by the United States to pursue a peaceful solution to the extremist problem and a willingness to work with extremist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah to find common ground and declare a truce, but it may also be viewed as a weakening of our resolve. The 2010 NSS goes on to discuss our ongoing effort to fight terrorism by stating,

“The United States is now fighting two wars with many thousands of our men and women deployed in harm’s way, and hundreds of billions of dollars dedicated to funding these conflicts. In Iraq, we are supporting a transition of responsibility to the sovereign Iraqi Government. We are supporting the security and prosperity of our partners in Afghanistan and Pakistan as part of a broader campaign to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qa’ida and its violent extremist affiliates. Yet these wars – and our global efforts to successfully counter violent extremism – are only one element of our strategic environment and cannot define America’s engagement with the world. Terrorism is one of many threats that are more consequential in a global age.” (NSS, 2010, pg. 8)

There is no mistaking the difference in tone between the 2006 and 2010 National Security Strategies published only four years apart. Indeed, the 2010 NSS seems to be more concerned with the state of the nation’s economy, environmental issues such as climate change, and our dependence on fossil fuels than it does with terrorism.

## Summary of Literature Review

Extremism continues to be an ever present threat to our nation's security and the U.S. must increase its efforts to diminish the ability of Jihadist groups such as Al-Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah from recruiting new militant members willing to attack their own nation. Mr. Hoffman provided a clear description of the unique problem extremism presents to the U.S. Mr. Hoffman explained how the extremists' rejection of contemporary ideologies leaves them with no option other than militant Jihad. Mr. Hoffman also indicated that for these extremists, total victory can only be obtained through the total destruction of the enemies of Allah and a return to an Islamic state governed by the rule of Shariah. Finally, he argued that extremists believe that the destruction of the enemies of Allah is the duty of every individual believer as well as the task of the Islamic state. This unique threat was supported further by Ayatollah Baqer al-Sadr when he expressed that Muslims had only two choices: to allow Islam to perish or destroy the western influence which threatens Islam. Perhaps the most alarming message of the extremist's intent was expressed by Hussein Mussawi when he stated, "We are not fighting so that the enemy recognizes us and offers us something. We are fighting to wipe out the enemy." Dr. Gabriel also offered a different perspective by discussing the issue from a former Islamic Cleric's perspective. Dr. Gabriel identified the inherent violence within the Koran and argued that the roots of terrorism have been at the core of Islam since the prophet Muhammad received the first verses of the Koran in about 610 A.D. (Gabriel, 2002, p. x) Finally, Mr. Heymann argued that terrorist organizations must be confronted on a political battlefield as well as incorporating a military or police action response. Mr. Heymann's argument suggested using more civic engagement activities and establishing stronger cooperative relationships within the local

Muslim communities in order to facilitate a better understanding of the root causes of extremism and radicalization.

This chapter has presented a review of what has been written about the subject of extremism and has highlighted the sources identified by various leading authors and governmental documents. To further the understanding of extremism, this study will explore the perceptions of local moderate Muslims regarding the current governmental policies and opinions of the “so called experts” surrounding the issue of extremism and the process of radicalization. Once the participants were identified and agreed to participate in the study, each individual completed a survey which attempted to assess the attitudes and concerns of the local Muslim community in comparison with the expressed concerns of the governmental policy. The survey consists of mostly multiple choice questions which ask the individual to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with certain expressed concerns from the governmental policies and will also contain a short open ended portion where participants will be asked to add any comments or concerns they have regarding the issue of extremism and the radicalization issue that was not addressed by the questions contained within the survey. A copy of the survey and data results is provided in Appendix A of this thesis. The collected data should help reveal the perceptions of the local moderate Muslim community as well as additional concerns not specifically addressed by the survey. Chapter 4 will discuss the difficulties this researcher faced while attempting to conduct this study as well as a summary of the survey results and how they compare to the governmental documents and subject matter experts discussed in the Literature review.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **ANALYSIS**

#### **Introduction**

The literature concerning Islamic extremism and radicalization clearly expressed the complexity of the problem and the severity of this unique threat to the United States. This study contributes to the research by examining and describing the perceptions of the local Muslim community and comparing their perspective of the problem with the perspective obtained from the prominent literature and published governmental policies regarding extremism and radicalization.

#### **Challenges Experienced in Administration of Survey**

The administration of the survey to the local Muslim community presented some unique challenges. First, the survey questions themselves contained questions that many within the local Islamic community found offensive. The subject of terrorism and extremism linked with the Islamic faith made for a very controversial topic and several members of the local Islamic community were reluctant to participate in the study. Several meetings were held with a senior member of the local Mosque to review the proposed survey questions and ensure that the questions were not overly offensive to the local Muslim community, but the topic itself remains a volatile subject, difficult to address without appearing to cause members of the local Muslim community to become defensive. After several weeks of meeting with a local leader within the

Muslim community and adhering to his advice on how to best structure the questions, the survey was finally ready to be administered.

Even with the support of the local leadership, a majority of the Muslim population appeared to be unwilling to participate in the study. However, those that did participate provided some very strong opinions on the subject of extremism and the religion of Islam. In general, it is likely that people with a strong or intense view are more likely to respond to a survey than people who are less involved. For example, people who are ardent liberals or conservatives are more likely to respond to political surveys than the “silent majority.” A copy of the survey questions and results is located in Appendix A at the end of this study. Also, although three separate Muslim leaders sent out e-mail messages to the members of the local mosque requesting that they participate in the study, responses to the survey were few in number.

### **Data Collection and Summary of Results**

The collection of survey results provided a clear picture of the perceptions of the local Muslims who agreed to participate in the study. It is important to remember that these results are only representative of a small percentage of the local Muslim community that participated in the study and cannot be used to predict the perceptions or opinions of the local Muslim population as a whole. However, the information provided by the study does make for some interesting observations.

Although one of the key objectives of our current National Strategy is to ensure the Muslim world that the United States is not waging a war against Islam, according to the results of the survey it appears that 17% (3 of the 18 participants) of the local Muslims believed that America is engaged in a religious war against Islam. Only 61% (11 of the 18 participants) believed that the current United States war is not focused on religion. This observation begs the

question, if 17% of local American Muslims believe that the United States is in fact waging a religious war against Islam, how many more Muslims living outside the United States (and our unique view of the world through American news stations) consider our country at war with Islam? After all, the majority of news reported in the Islamic world comes from Al-Jazira news and portrays a very different message from the one portrayed in the American media.

When asked whether or not American Foreign Policy was a contributing factor to the existence of international extremist groups, a large portion (67%) of participants answered “Yes.” This is also the same percentage (67%) of individuals who believed that Al-Queda attacks are a result of American military involvement in the Muslim world. Furthermore, 61% of the local Muslim population surveyed indicated that political differences such as the United States being too involved in the affairs of other countries with 50% of the respondents going on to cite a more specific reason (the United States’ support of Israel) as the most likely cause for extremist attacks against the United States. The survey results clearly indicate that the local American Muslim community believes that American foreign policy is more responsible for the existence of extremist groups than foreign propaganda or other influences. This perception (regardless of whether the perception is accurate) must continue to be addressed by the United States if it is going to avoid a continued growth of extremist groups surge in violent attacks.

When asked what they believed was most responsible for Radicalization or caused a person to take up an extremist ideology, half of the local Muslim community that participated in the survey answered that poor political decisions made by American politicians which negatively impacted the Muslim community and caused resentment led to Radicalization while only 17% answered that anti-United States media and propaganda such as Al-Jazira and extremist Salafi literature or Jihadi videotapes were the likely cause. This was a very different approach to

determining the root cause of extremism than the views expressed by the governmental documents (2007 National Intelligence Estimate) examined which claimed that the extremist propaganda and extremist literature were a strong influence on the process of radicalization. Of course, the United States government would want to avoid negative views of recent political decisions / policies and instead place responsibility on the individuals who engage in the proliferation of extremist ideology. Perhaps the truth lies somewhere in the middle of these two theories with both the United States recent political decisions and the spread of an extremist view of Islam through propaganda and Salafi literature being responsible for the increase in extremist ideology.

The results of the survey also indicated that an overwhelming majority (89%) of the local Muslim community thought that the United States was not justified in its invasion of Iraq in 2003. A slightly smaller percentage (56%) of the local Muslim population surveyed indicated that they believed that the United States was not justified in invading Afghanistan after the attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. These views are most likely similar to the rest of the current American population, but are arguably different from the Muslim communities living outside the United States who again receive their news through a different media network.

When asked about the use of violence against American civilians or military forces, an overwhelming 100% of the local Muslims indicated that violence against any civilian population was un-acceptable, but only 33% believed that violence against United States military (serving overseas) was unacceptable in response to the American government's actions in the Muslim world. While 33% of the participants believed that violence against the American military was unacceptable, 39% indicated that the military was a legitimate target for a violent response. In addition, 28% of the local Muslim community were undecided marking "I don't know" when

asked the question. The results of these two questions provided some interesting points to consider. First, the unanimous agreement that violence against a civilian population was an unacceptable action and not supported by the local Muslim community in any form supports Islam as a peaceful religion and that extremist groups who resort to terrorist attacks against a civilian population do not receive support from the Islamic community regardless of how the extremist groups market their attacks as being in support of Islam. Second, the strong belief by the local Islamic community condemning violent attacks against a civilian population should serve as a guide to military leaders when considering future “Rule of Engagement” criteria and military operations that take place in Urban terrain near large civilian populations. This observation is supported later in the survey when 78% of the local Muslim population responded that they did not believe that any civilian casualties would be worth the death or capture of a high ranking terrorist such as Osama bin Laden or other Al-Qaida leader. It is also important to note that this percentage might have been even higher, but three individuals who participated in the survey chose not to answer this question.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

This chapter analyzed the results of the survey in order to compare the answers provided by the local Muslim community to the opinions provided by the leading authors and the information found within the governmental documents discussed earlier in the Literature Review. The results of the survey provided for some interesting observations and also provided a different approach to trying to understand the complex issue of extremism. Based on the research and answers to the secondary questions, the analysis suggests that there exist numerous causes or influencers that lead to extremism. While leading authors and governmental documents suggest Salafi Literature, extremist propaganda, etc. as being a leading cause in the growth of extremist

groups, the local Islamic community views the recent governmental foreign policy as the primary cause of the surge in extremist groups and activity. Chapter 5 will expand on this conclusion as well as make several recommendations for action and further study.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this thesis was to conduct a qualitative analysis of the sources of extremism from multiple perspectives, determine if the current National Security Strategies and governmental policies properly identify the sources of extremism, and make recommendations on how to counter the sources of extremism and improve United States security and counterterrorism strategy. This chapter draws conclusions from the analysis conducted in Chapter 4 and makes recommendations on how to improve national security efforts, counterterrorism strategy, and suggest additional research that can continue to add to the understanding of the extremist threat. This chapter is organized into four parts: introduction, conclusions and recommendations, areas for further study, and conclusion.

#### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Listed below are two conclusions and recommendations reached after the analysis of the literature review and survey results.

1. **Extremist Ideology and Moderate Muslims**. Both the literary review and the results gathered from the analysis of the survey indicate that there is a clear distinction between the extremist ideology and what is believed, taught, and practiced in the local Muslim community. The common association most Americans make between Islam and terrorism is a dangerous misconception and can lead to additional problems rather than a solution to the extremist threat.

**Recommendation:** The United States must continue to reassure the Muslim community (both in words and in action) that the war on terror is not a war against Islam. In addition to the

responsibility of our government to reach out to the local (and international) Islamic community, The Muslim community must also become more involved in helping to manage American's perception of the Islamic faith by being willing to discuss openly the issue of terrorism and extremism without fear or becoming overly defensive of their faith. The controversial issue of terrorism and its perceived association or link to the Islamic faith needs to be addressed before a united effort can be established among both Muslims and non-Muslims to combat an extremist ideology and radicalization of impressionable youth.

2. **Extremism and National Policy** Both the literary review and the results obtained from the analysis of the survey results clearly indicate that American Foreign Policy (specifically the Israeli-Palestinian Issue) is a primary source, and some argue the birth or nucleus, of extremist activity. Research also suggests that our continued military presence in traditional Islamic countries and our recent military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan have resulted in an escalation of the problem more than it has to combat the issue of extremism. Unfortunately, the political environment is a difficult, complex arena with multiple variables influencing the decision making process and there is not a simple answer or formula available to mitigate this central problem.

**Recommendation:** The nation's foreign policy must be careful not to alienate the international Muslim community by making hasty decisions which can be perceived as hostile towards Islam. Any hostile action perceived by the international community will only add to the extremists' ability to influence young moderate Muslims toward a more violent ideology. Therefore, every decision on foreign policy must be evaluated from an Islamic point of view and we must be able to defend our intent in terms of combating extremist actions while avoiding the appearance of aggression against the Islamic faith or people. Furthermore, based on the overwhelming



response to the survey questions involving civilian casualties, the United States military will need to continue to issue strict rules of engagement when operating in an urban environment. The military must manage the perception of the local population and international Islamic community to ensure that any civilian casualties are viewed as a result of extremist action; not American military action. If extremist organizations can use civilian casualties (or inappropriate military actions reported in the media) to highlight their cause, it will aid in their recruitment efforts and continue to strengthen the resolve of those who support an extremist ideology.

### **Further Study**

Additional literary sources are available for future study and comparison as well as other Muslim communities. Specifically, it would be interesting to compare the survey results of the small sample size obtained here in a small southern town in Mississippi with a similar size sample from a larger metropolitan area. Additionally, it would also be interesting to compare the survey results taken from the local Islamic community and compare them to a similar size sample of non-Muslim Americans to see what differences can be identified.

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**Appendix A: Extremism Survey Questions & Results**

Age of Participant:

18-21 2 / 11%; 22-30 6 / 33%; 31-40 6 / 33%; >40 3 / 17%; N/A 1 / 5% **18 Total**

Gender:

Male 15 / 83% Female 2 / 11% N/A 1 / 5%

Citizenship:

USA 6 / 33% Other 11 / 61% N/A (No Answer) 1 / 5%

Survey Questions: - Please circle the answer that best represents your opinion. If you feel uncomfortable answering a question, then please feel free to leave it blank and proceed to the next question. Participants may stop taking the survey at any time. Thank you for your participation in this study.

1. Please rank (1-3) the following according to your personal priorities in terms of how they relate to your personal identity (1 being the highest priority/importance and 3 being the lowest priority/importance).

\_\_\_ Religion (13 / 72% Ranked as #1; 4 / 22% Ranked as #2; 1 / 5% Ranked as #3)

\_\_\_ Family (3 / 17% Ranked as #1; 12 / 66% Ranked as #2; 2 / 11% Ranked as #3 w/ 1 N/A)

\_\_\_ Country (American/Patriotism) (2 / 11% Ranked as #1; 1 / 5% Ranked as #2; 14 / 78% Ranked as #3 w/ 1 / 5% N/A)

2. Do you consider yourself:

- A. 0% An Extremist
- B. 8 / 44% A Moderate Muslim (a practicing Muslim who claims Islam as their faith, but does not dedicate 100% of their life to following their faith).
- C. 10 / 56% A Devout Muslim, (a practicing Muslim who has dedicated 100% of their life to following their faith, but without extremist viewpoints.)

3. Is the American government at war with the religion of Islam?

- A. 3 / 17% YES (America is engaged in a religious war against Islam).
- B. 11 / 61% NO (America is engaged in war in Islamic countries, but not against the religion of Islam).
- C. 4 / 22% I don't know

4. Can a good Muslim be a good American?

- A. 18 / 100% YES
- B. 0 / 0% NO

5. Do you believe that radical extremists hijacked planes and flew them into buildings on 9/11?

- A. 7 / 39% YES
- B. 3 / 17% NO
- C. 8 / 44% I don't know

6. Do you believe that the U.S. government / administration had advance knowledge of the 9/11 attacks, and either organized the attacks or allowed the attacks to occur?

- A. 3 / 17% YES
- B. 4 / 22% NO
- C. 11 / 61% I don't know. It is possible

7. Do you believe that American Foreign Policy is a contributing factor to the existence of International Extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda?

- A. 12 / 67% Yes
- B. 3 / 17% No
- C. 3 / 17% I don't Know

8. Do you believe that Al Qaeda is an Extremist terrorist organization trying to attack America?

- A. 12 / 67% YES
- B. 1 / 5% NO
- C. 5 / 28% I don't know

9. Do you believe that Al Qaeda is attacking America because Al Qaeda hates American freedoms?

- A. 0 / 0% YES
- B. 13 / 72% NO
- C. 5 / 28% I don't know

10. Is Al Qaeda attacking America because of American military involvement in the Muslim world?

- A. 12 / 67% YES
- B. 2 / 11% NO
- C. 4 / 22% I don't know

11. Is it justifiable for the U.S. government to do any of the following in an attempt to prevent terrorist attacks in America:

- taking religion and ethnicity into account as one factor when deciding whom to interview and search at airports?

A. 1/5% YES      B. 16/90% NO      C. 1/5% I don't know

- monitoring activities at American mosques?

A. 1/5% YES      B. 15/83% NO      C. 1/5% I don't know      (1 N/A)

- listening to phone calls of people in America whom the government claims are connected in some way with Al Qaeda?

A. 1/5% YES      B. 6/33% NO      C. 11/61% Depends on the strength / evidence

- having an informer pretend to support or encourage violence against America, to see if the targeted Muslims will decide to attack American targets?

A. 0/0% YES      B. 6/33% NO      C. 11/61% Depends on amount of evidence collected  
(1 N/A)

- monitoring Muslim charities in America, in the hopes of preventing funding for possible terrorist attacks?

A. 2/11% YES      B. 13/72% NO      C. 3/17% I don't know

12. Which of the following reasons is the most likely cause for Extremist attacks against the United States?

- A. 0/0% Religious Differences – Christianity V. Islam, Jihad, or Holy War
- B. 11/61% Political Differences – United States too involved in the affairs of other countries
- C. 0/0% Cultural Differences – Westernization and U. S. influence on traditional Islamic values.
- D. 9/50% Specific Reason – United States support of Israel
- E. 5/28% Uncertain / I don't know

(Note: This question had several individuals who chose multiple responses.)

13. Which of the following do you feel is most responsible for Radicalization or causes a person to take up an Extremist ideology?



- A. 3 / 17% Anti-U.S. media/propaganda such as Al-Jazira & extremist Salafi literature or jihadi videotapes propaganda.
- B. 9 / 50% Poor Political decisions made by American politicians which negatively impact the Muslim community and cause resentment.
- C. 1 / 5% Personal attacks made against family members or feelings of resentment that stem from being outcast due to religious beliefs.
- D. 3 / 17% All of the above
- E. 2 / 11% I don't know

14. Have you ever visited an Islamic Mosque that supports an extremist ideology or could present a potential threat to the security of the United States?

- A. 0 / 0% YES
- B. 11 / 61% NO
- C. 7 / 39% No such Mosque exists

If Yes, Was the Islamic Mosque:

- A. Inside the United States
- B. Outside the United States
- C. 18 / 100% N/A (Not Applicable)

15. If you, or a member of your family, have been questioned by the federal government at any time after 9/11, how were you treated during the interview?

- A. 1 / 5% TREATED WELL
- B. 0 / 0% TREATED BADLY
- C. 17 / 94% Not Applicable – Have not been questioned by government authorities.

16. Was America justified in invading Iraq in 2003?

- A. 0 / 0% YES
- B. 16 / 89% NO
- C. 2 / 11% I don't know

17. Was America justified in invading Afghanistan after 9/11?

- A. 2 / 11% YES
- B. 10 / 56% NO
- C. 6 / 33% I don't know

18. Is violence against American civilians acceptable, in retaliation for the American government's actions in the Muslim world?

- A. 0 / 0% YES
- B. 18 / 100% NO

C. 0 / 0% I don't know

19. Is violence against the American military overseas acceptable, in retaliation for the American government's actions in the Muslim world?

A. 7 / 39% YES

B. 6 / 33% NO

C. 5 / 28% I don't know

20. Is violence by Muslims against the American military in the U.S. acceptable, in retaliation for the American government's actions in the Muslim world?

A. 1 / 5% YES

B. 15 / 83% NO

C. 2 / 11% I don't know

21. Is violence by Muslims against American government officials acceptable, in retaliation for the American government's actions in the Muslim world?

A. 1 / 5% YES

B. 16 / 89% NO

C. 1 / 5% I don't know

22. If you learned about a plot to attack targets inside America, would you tell law enforcement authorities?

A. 18 / 100% YES

B. 0 / 0% NO

C. 0 / 0% I don't know

23. American military action sometimes results in civilian casualties. What do you think is an "acceptable" civilian casualty rate when mounting a military attack against a High Value Target (such as Osama Bin Laden or other Al-Qaida leader)?

A. 14 / 78% None "0" – I do not believe that any civilian casualties are worth the death or capture of a high ranking terrorist.

B. 0 / 0% Less than 5 civilian casualties

C. 0 / 0% Between 6 - 12 civilian casualties

- D. **1 / 5%** More than 12 – As long as the Terrorist Leader is captured or killed, the civilian casualties, although regrettable, are a necessary cost we must accept to end the war on Terror.

(Note: 3 individuals chose not to answer this question or mark N/A).

24. Do you feel that an individual or small group can be justified in targeting and/or killing civilians to help them achieve their goal? Note: Unlike the question above where civilian casualties were an unfortunate “collateral damage” to the primary military operation, this question refers to the deliberate targeting of civilians as the objective of the military and not as a consequence or unfortunate collateral damage during a raid on a military or political target.

- A. **18 / 100%** Targeting civilians can never be justified.  
B. **0 / 0%** Targeting civilians can sometimes be justified.  
C. **0 / 0%** Targeting civilians is always justified – All is fair in war.

25. In your opinion, about what percentage of Muslim Mosques in this country are at risk for teaching an extremist ideology or creating Muslim Extremists that might pose a potential threat of Domestic Terrorism to this country?

- A. **12 / 67%** 0% - There is no threat of a Muslim Mosque teaching Islamic Extremism or posing a threat of Radicalization and producing a Domestic Terrorism.  
B. **5 / 28%** Less than 10% - no more than a Christian Church teaching a Radical form of Christianity and producing a Domestic Terrorist.  
C. **0 / 0%** Between 10 – 25%  
D. **0 / 0%** More than 25%

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Total Army Instructor Trainer Course, Camp Shelby, MS	2002
Infantry Captains Career Course, FT Benning, GA	2004
Combined Arms Exercise (CAX), Millington, TN	2006
Military History Instructor Course, FT Leavenworth, KS	2007
Inspector General Course, FT Belvoir, VA	2008

### CIVILIAN

1996-2006: Teacher (English/Spanish), Oxford High School  
2006-2007: Recruiting and Operations Officer, University of Memphis  
2007-Present: Assistant Professor of Military Science, University of Mississippi

### MILITARY

Mississippi Army National Guard, Oxford, Mississippi

1999-2001: Platoon Leader, A Co. 2/198th AR, Oxford, MS/ Task Force Rifles SFOR X  
Bosnia-Herzegovina  
- Deployment to Bosnia-Herzegovina in support of Task Force Rifles SFOR X  
rotation.

2000-2002: Executive Officer, HHC 2/198th AR, Senatobia, MS  
- Coordinate administrative and logistical support for HHC and corresponding  
companies; took command in absence of the commander; supervise internal  
security; track maintenance and supply issues; and coordinate with battalion staff.

2002-2004: TAC Officer, 4th GSB RTI, Camp Shelby, MS  
- Teach, Assess and Council Officer Candidates in the Art and Science of Military  
Leadership. Evaluated Leadership potential and performance while teaching  
skills such as: Military Tactics, Land Navigation/Terrain Association, Troop  
Leading Procedures/Operation Order Process, etc.

2004-2006: Commander, A Co. 2/198th AR, Oxford, MS/Operation Iraqi Freedom III,

An Najaf, Iraq

- Provide leadership for a company of 78 soldiers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III to An Najaf, Iraq from 2004-2006. Duties include: leading, planning, directing and supervising company operations; guiding the unit in carrying out all missions; establishing unit policies and procedures; establishing and maintaining operations security; initiating and ensuring unit safety program is followed; ensuring unit readiness is maintained at all times; performing periodic inspections to ensure unit readiness; stress principles of accountability and maintenance; instruct and cross-train subordinates; maintaining soldier strength; ensuring proper training is conducted as needed.

2006-2007: TAC Officer, 4th GSB RTI, Camp Shelby, MS  
- Teach, Assess and Council Officer Candidates in the Art and Science of Military Leadership. Evaluated Leadership potential and performance while teaching skills such as: Military Tactics, Land Navigation/Terrain Association, Troop Leading Procedures/Operation Order Process, etc.

2007-2012: Inspector General, 184th ESC, Laurel, MS  
- Serves as the Deputy Inspector General to the Adjutant General. Responsible for assisting the Inspector General in monitoring the morale, welfare, and discipline of the Mississippi Army and Air National Guard consisting of over 13,000 Guardsmen. Reports on the discipline, efficiency, economy, morale, training and readiness throughout the command. As required provides assistance to assigned soldiers, airmen, civilians, and family members. Conducts general and special inspections, performs inquiries and investigations, and serves as a teacher and trainer on a wide variety of military related topics. Responsible for identifying systemic issues and addressing them with the appropriate organizations/staff agencies. Coordinates with the DOD, DA, and AF Inspector General Offices on IG related matters. Supervise and monitor the work of two Assistant IG's.

US DECORATIONS / BADGES:

Mississippi War Medal

National Defense Service Medal (2nd Award)

Army Service Ribbon

Army Achievement Medal (3rd Award)

Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (3rd Award)

Army Commendation Medal

Armed Forces Reserve Medal with M device (2nd Award)

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal

NATO Medal

Overseas Service Ribbon

Global War on Terrorism Service Medal

Iraq Campaign Medal

Combat Action Badge

Bronze Star Medal