When New Terrorism Met the New Media

Dr. Gabriel Weimann
Nigeria kidnapped girls 'shown in Boko Haram video'

In the video, released by Boko Haram, its leader says the girls will be freed only if imprisoned militants are released.
Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau uses the video to call for the group's imprisoned fighters to be freed.
Boko Haram

- Founded in 2002, name means "Western education is forbidden" in the Hausa language
- Launched violent struggle in 2009, ostensibly to create Islamic state
- Thousands killed, three million affected, mostly in north-east
- Declared terrorist group by US in 2013
Always Online: Terrorists and Laptops

Keeping in Touch
Always Online: Terrorists and Laptops
Adam Yahiye Gadahn “Azzam”
May Allah Protect Him
Hezbollah bunker captured in August 2006 by the Israeli Army
Afghan Cyber Army (ACA)
Our Project: Monitoring Terror in Cyberpace

- Study is now in its 16th year
- Monitoring every terrorist website (n=9,800+)
- Archiving, coding and analysis of the websites’ contents (visual and textual)
- Research funded by USIP (United States Institute of Peace), NIJ (National Institute of Justice), Woodrow Wilson Center, and other grants
Reporting the findings:

Cyberterrorism
How Real Is the Threat?

Abraham Kaplan and Gabriel Weimann

Freedom and Terror
Reason and Unreason in Politics

Abraham Kaplan and Gabriel Weimann

How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet

www.terror.net

Gabriel Weimann

Theater of Terror
Mass Media and International Terrorism

Gabriel Weimann and Gadi Shragai

The New Arena, the New Challenges

Terror on the Internet

Gabriel Weimann

Foreword by Bruce Hoffman
...and Al Qaeda's review

Al-Qaeda site posts Israeli book

Jihad website refers to book written by Haifa University professor discussing role net plays in terrorism

Eitan Glickman
Published: 02.05.07, 09:51 / Israel News

A book written by an Israeli professor has been posted on an al-Qaeda affiliated website.

Professor Gabriel Weimann of Haifa University's Communications Department was surprised to find a picture of the cover of his book, 'Terror on the Internet: The New Arena, the New Challenges,' and links to its summaries, on a global Jihad organization's website.

"At first it seemed quite strange to me that they would publish my book," Weimann said Sunday, "but then when I read the text in Arabic I understood their motivation."
TERRORIST PRESENCE ON THE NET:

In 1998: 12 terrorist websites

In 2003: 2,650 terrorist websites

In January 2014: 9,800+ terrorist websites
WHO ARE THE ONLINE TERRORISTS?

Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement), the Lebanese Hizbollah (Party of God), the Egyptian Al-Gama’a al Islamiyya (Islamic Group, IG), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLFP), the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Boko Haram (Nigeria), the Peruvian Tupak-Amaru (MRTA) and ‘The Shining Path’ (Sendero Luminoso), the Kahane Lives movement, the Basque ETA movement, the Real IRA (RIRA), Supreme Truth (Aum Shinrikyo), the Colombian National Liberation Army (ELN-Colombia), the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC), the Popular Democratic Liberation Front Party in Turkey (DHKP/C), the Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK), the Zapatista National Liberation Army (ELNZ), the Japanese Red Army (JRA), the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), the Mujahedin, the Chechens, Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba and Al-Qaeda.
Why is the Net so useful for terrorists?
The Advantages of the Internet for Terrorists:

- Easy access
- No control, no regulations, no laws
- Huge audiences, worldwide
- Anonymity
- Fast flow of information
- Interactive medium
- Cheap to establish and maintain
- Multi media environment (print; sound; photos; video;)
- The Internet as a source for journalists
Uses of the Internet by Terrorists:

- Psychological warfare
- Propaganda
- Networking terrorists
- Recruitment and mobilization
- Fund raising
- Datamining, information gathering
- Instructions
- Inner debates
- Cyber-war, cyberterrorism
The Emerging Trends:

1. Migration to New Media
2. “Virtual Interactivity”
3. “Narrowcasting”
4. Lone Wolf Terrorism
The New Trends:

New Terrorism Meets the New Media
New Technologies Applied by Terrorists

facebook

Google Earth

YouTube

Instagram

twitter
3 stages in terrorist use of the Net:

Stage 1: **Websites only**

Stage 2: **Websites** + **Interactive**
(forums, chatrooms)

Stage 3: **Websites** + **Interactive** + **Social Media**
(YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
Al Qaeda’s “early” site (1998-2002)
Al Qaeda’s new site:
Al Qaeda’s new site:
Inspire Magazine
Inspire is an English language online magazine published by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).
From *Inspire* 12:
Car Bombs in America
Multimedia: Hezbollah’s Al-Manar Television Online:

Al-Manar Channel The Channel of Arabs and Muslims

Site Map
Hizbollah’s Al-Nour Radio Online
Dar al-Hadi: Hezbollah’s publishing house Online
Download Nasrallah’s posters...
Jihad Academy online: A Film Production by the Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF)
Terrorist Migration to Social Media
Why social media?

1. Interactive
2. Trendy, popular
3. Young demographics
4. “knock on their doors”
YouTube, They Tube...
Importance of YouTube

- Attractive, visual, moving images
- Much easier to locate (no Arabic or high level of Internet literacy necessary)
- Appealing to young people
- Easy copying and dissemination (e-mail links, but also copy to VHS, CDs, DVDs, mobile phones)
If you put the words “Hamas Islamic Resistance Movement” in YouTube search...
NEW: Anwar Al Awlaki - Tribute Video (EMOTIONAL)
by Companions4Deen • 2 years ago • 33,701 views
A short beautiful clip on Sheikh Anwar Al Awlaki. The Prophet said, "The Hour (Last Day) will not be established until (religious) ...

[New] Tribute to Imam Anwar Al Awlaki (RA)
by Abu Musa • 2 years ago • 30,538 views
The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: "The 'ulamaa are inheritors of the Prophets." There are three kinds of ulama today 1.

Anwar Al Awlaki The True Muslims MUST SEE
by theummahnews • 3 years ago • 2,219 views
Hamas Launches AqsaTube, Inspired by YouTube (October 2008)
Hamas Launches Pal Tube (2011)
All terrorist groups are now on YouTube
Hezbollah’s YouTube
Al Qaeda’s YouTube
Al Qaeda’s YouTube
Chechen Jihadists Claim Responsibility for Moscow Subway Bombings (March 2010) on YouTube
PKK on YouTube

VUR ASLANIM VUR ELLERİN DERT GÖRMESİN......
“Istiqlal Media”
Taliban’s YouTube channel
Terror on Facebook
“Generation Awlaki” on Facebook
“Generation Awlaki” on Facebook

The sea of Knowledge you passed on in your Lectures
Should be gathered like Sparkling drops of sweet Nectar
That revives any lost Heart appealing to all Sectors
It’s too late to try to rob the Ummah of this Treasure
Our humble Shaykh has already gained Allah’s pleasure
Scattered pieces of Pearls
Have reached all over the World

Generation Awlaki

2,877 likes · 1,497 talking about this
“The ink of the Scholars, the blood of the Martyrs”
America of Today is the *Pharoah* of Yesterday and for every Pharoah there will be a *Musa*...

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Asadullah Alkhurasanii: beautiful smile of our beloved sheikh.
“Download Awlaki’s Lectures”

Anwar al-Awlaki is a Muslim scholar of Yemeni heritage born in New Mexico. He served as an Imam in California, and later in the Washington, D.C. area where he headed the Dar Al-Hijrah Islamic Center and was also the Muslim Chaplain at George Washington University. In 2004 he returned to his native Yemen where he was imprisoned in 2007. He was killed by an American drone strike in Yemen in 2011.
Mohammed al Zawahiri's Facebook page
(brother of Ayman)
Three video clips posted on his Facebook page show Mohammed al Zawahiri encouraging would-be jihadists to support:

The mujahideen in Mali
The Al Nusrah Front in Syria
The Islamic State of Iraq
Twitter: Tweets of Terror
The al Shabaab Attack on Westgate Mall, Nairobi, Kenya

September 2013
For long we have waged war against the Kenyans in our land, now it's time to shift the battleground and take the war to their land #Westgate
Here are 2 of the Mujahideen inside #Westgate mall, unruffled and strolling around the mall in such sangfroid manner pic.twitter.com/bMG87AQOon

The hostages who were being held by the Mujahideen inside #Westgate are still alive, looking quite disconcerted but, nevertheless, alive

The incoherent ramblings of Kenyan officials and the blatant discrepancies with regards to the Mujahideen at #Westgate betrays their fears
Al-Qaeda on Twitter

Under the guise of its Shamukh al-Islam website, the official website of al Qaeda, the terror group has now its own Twitter feed @shomokhalislam
Al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria ISIL: Online Executions

Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)
ISIL’s prisoners crucified

ISIL took responsibility for the crucifixion on Twitter
Syrian Electronic Army (SEA)

SEA is a collection of computer hackers who support the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Using denial of service attacks, defacement, and other methods, it mainly targets political opposition groups and western websites, including US news organizations and US banks.
In 2013 The Syrian Electronic Army hacked a number of high-profile Twitter accounts and websites, including those of *The New York Times*, the Associated Press, and the *Guardian*. 
April 2013: SEA hacks AP causing stock market drop of $136 billion
A Terrorist’s Dream Comes True..
Mumbai attacks (2008) were planned with Google Earth
LeT in Mumbai attacks (2008) used Google Earth
Using Google Earth website to pinpoint attacks (in Basra, Iraq)
Google Earth Map of Abu Ghraib Prison posted on Jihadi website
The above examples of Nokia Map Functions are displayed in a Pro
Islamic State of Iraq (al Qaida) Discussion thread at
http://www.muslm.net/vb/showthread.php?p=1797473 with software
Maps and Suggested Routes for Traveling to Somalia for Jihad
Google Earth used to target Israel

We obtain the details from Google Earth
PIJ Announces Use of Google Earth to Target Sderot
image of the CIA headquarters in Langley, posted on Jihadi sites
The Impact of Terrorist Use of New Media:

Lone Wolves in Cyberspace
VIRTUAL PACKS OF LONE WOLVES
A lone wolf terrorist is someone who commits or prepares for, or is suspected of committing or preparing for, violent acts in support of some group, movement, or ideology, but who does so alone, outside of any command structure and without material assistance from any group.
The Shift Toward Leaderless Terrorism
LONE WOLF TERRORISM
UNDERSTANDING THE GROWING THREAT
"The most likely scenario that we have to guard against right now ends up being more of a lone wolf operation than a large, well-coordinated terrorist attack"

President Obama
August 16, 2011
Jose Pimentel
(arrested November 2011)
Army Major Nidal Hasan has been charged with killing 13 people at Fort Hood in 2009.
Britain’s “Lone Wolf”: Terrorist Isa Ibrahim
THE EVIL FACE OF TERROR

BEHEADED

ON A BRITISH STREET

Ranting fanatic butchers soldier in Help for Heroes shirt
Calling the “wolves”: 

I AM PROUD TO BE A TRAITOR TO AMERICA

Samir Khan

This is the story of the Muslim American jihadi, Samir Khan. After working a few years in the jihad media sector in America, he packed his bags and left for Yemen to help the mujahidin. This is an account of how he happily became a traitor to America and why he chose to make such a decision.
Video By Al-Qaeda Media Company Al-Sahab Uses Image Of Nidal Hasan To Underline Call For Lone Wolf Operations
The Boston Marathon attack
April 15, 2013
The Tsarnaev brothers
The Tsarnaev brothers
Federal law enforcement officials have confirmed that Dzhokhar Tsarnaev and his brother got bomb-making instructions from *Inspire* magazine.
Open Source Jihad

In this section:

Make a bomb in the kitchen of your Mom
How to use Asrar al-Mujahideen

The pressurized cooker is the most effective method. Glue the shrapnel to the inside of the pressurized cooker then fill in the cooker with the inflammable material. Insert the prepared lamp into the inflammable material gently in order not to break the filament of the lamp. Then have the wires sticking out of the hole in the lid of the cooker. Wrap some tape around the hole to seal any openings and connect the wires to the electric source in the same way as we did with the iron pipe.

The following are a few safety precautions:
1. Put you trust in Allah and pray for the success of your operation. This is the most important rule.
2. Wear gloves throughout the preparation of the explosive to avoid leaving behind fingerprints.
3. This is an explosive device so take care during preparation and handling.
Teaching the “Wolves”
In 2013 al Qaeda presents a new online booklet:

**LONE MUJAHID POCKETBOOK**

“A step by step guide on how to become a successful lone mujahid. Collected from Inspire Magazine issue 1 - 19th OSJ.”
Glorifying the “Wolves”
Glorifying the “Wolves”

A Statement Regarding the Events at Fort Hood, Texas
A graphic from *Inspire* 11, imagining an angelic Tamerlan Tzarnaev texting his mother:

Tamerlan’s SMS to his mom:

"My dear mom, I will lay down my life for Islam. I’m gonna die for Islam Inshaa Allah."

(Imagine an angelic Tamerlan texting his mother.)
Jihad Jane – Over a Dozen YouTube Pages

In March 2010, an American woman, Colleen LaRose aka "Jihad Jane," had been arrested for alleged ties to Al-Qaeda. LaRose maintained over a dozen YouTube pages devoted to violent jihad. Her activities included alleged involvement in an plot to kill the Swedish cartoonish Lars Vilks.
Lone Wolf Jihadists Arrested in the West and in Possession of *Inspire*


2. Naser Jason Abdo, a Muslim U.S. in the Army, arrested in July 2011. Abdo was planning an attack on Fort Hood military personnel, similar to the shooting by Major Nidal Hasan. He was found in possession of an article from *Inspire* titled "How to Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom," which he used to make the bombs he planned to use in his attack.

3. Nine suspects in the U.K.: British officials conducted coordinated raids in three separate cities after concluding that the suspects were "researching, discussing, carrying out reconnaissance, and agreeing on potential targets," and "igniting and testing incendiary material"; one target was the U.S. Embassy in London. They were using *Inspire*.

4. Hakan Ertarkan, arrested April 12, 2011. Ertakan, 21, from the Edmonton neighborhood of London, was found to be in possession of a CD issue of *Inspire*. He was charged with "possessing a record of information of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism."

5. Christian Emde and Robert Baum, arrested July 15, 2011. German citizens Emde, 28, and Baum, 24, were arrested when they tried to enter Britain in possession of electronic copies of *Inspire*.

6. Zahid Iqbal, Mohammed Sharfaraz Ahmed, Umar Arshad, and Syed Farhan Hussain, arrested in Britain on April 24, 2012. The four, all aged 21 to 30, are suspected of plotting to drive a toy car loaded with explosives under the gates of a military base. Iqbal is accused of leading a terror network under the instruction of Al-Qaeda masterminds in Pakistan; all are accused of working to recruit others, of taking their lead from *Inspire*, and of possessing copies of it.
Migration to Social Media Correlates With:

1. “Virtual Interactivity”
2. “Narrowcasting”
Online Counterterrorism:
New Arena, New Challenges
1. The new digital arena requires new warriors, new weapons and new defenses (including NSA monitoring, counter-campaigns).
2. The new "war on terrorism" requires new regulations so that we will not pay heavier prices in terms of our civil liberties.
3. **Preemptive**: Prepare for future challenges (e.g., next generation’s platforms) instead of response-only
Thanks

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