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Is Islamist Terrorism More Dangerous?: An Empirical Study of Group Ideology, Organization, and Goal Structure

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Scholars have traditionally argued that Islamist terrorist groups tend to commit higher casualty attacks. Noting that casualty rates of attacks vary widely across Islamist terrorist groups, this study advances an alternative hypothesis that group organizational features and goal structures better explain differing casualty rates than does the overarching ideological type. Using both cross-national analysis and a case study of post-invasion Iraq, I demonstrate that there are two basic types of Islamist terrorist groups whose organizational and goal-structure features explain divergent casualty rates: “strategic groups” that function similarly to secular national-liberation and regime-change movements and “abstract/universal groups” that are affiliated with the global al-Qaeda network.

Keywords al-Qaeda, goal structure, ideology, Iraq, Islamism, organization

Since the late 1960s and the advent of comprehensive, cross-national statistics on terrorist attacks, the casualty rate of individual terrorism has increased. A casual glance at statistics measuring the average number of victims of international terrorist attacks—persons who are wounded or killed—illustrates this disturbing phenomenon.¹ For the period 1968 through 1979, the average number of victims per international terrorist attack was 2.08. This number increased to 3.83 in the 1980s and further to 10.38 during the 1990s and 10.89 for the period 2000 to 2005. It is particularly striking that the average number of annual international terrorist attacks actually *decreased* from a high point of 339.6 annually in the 1980s to 262.5 annually for the 1990s, demonstrating that while the frequency of attacks declined, the intensity of attacks increased. These statistics correspond with those produced by Hoffman that show that the lethality rates of terrorist attacks against United States citizens—17% of attacks in the 1970s resulted in U.S. fatalities as opposed to 25% in the 1990s—has increased in the past several decades.²

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What accounts for rising lethality, or casualty rate, of terrorist attacks? Scholars have advanced a host of possibilities: the desire of terrorist groups to capture more media and public attention in an information-saturated world; the greater availability of deadly weapons; the rise of state-supported terrorist groups; the participation of amateurs in terrorist attacks; the greater sophistication of attacks by terrorists due to trial and error; the rise of inter-ethnic and inter-communal terrorist attacks; the greater audacity exhibited by terrorists that fail to take responsibility for attacks; and the rise of religiously-motivated terrorist groups.³ The last explanation, the rise of religious terrorism, is the common thread running through nearly all contemporary analyses seeking to explain the increasing lethality of terrorist attacks in the past twenty years. It can be empirically substantiated through descriptive statistics that religiously-motivated terrorist groups are indeed more prone than are secular groups to committing attacks that result in greater casualties. This is demonstrated in Table 1, which measures the number of victims per international terrorist attack sorted by basic group orientation—"leftist," "rightist," "national-separatist," "religious," and "other," which includes criminally-motivated groups—for the time period 1968 to 2005.⁴

Religious terrorist groups, while only committing the second largest number of attacks in the time period, have a higher average number of victims per attack (persons wounded or killed) than all three of the other types combined.

What explains the different levels of lethality between religious and secular terrorists? Scholars of terrorism generally point to four fundamental qualities of religiously-oriented terrorist groups that make them more prone to conduct attacks or to adopt tactics calculated to result in high casualty rates. First, scholars argue that religious terrorist groups are motivated by deep-set cultural identities and a desire to demonstrate cultural dignity in the face of an adversary that represents an alien and, to the terrorists, objectionable way of life. The natural inhibitions that would shape the tactical behavior of terrorists launching attacks against a population with whom they share some identification are absent when a religiously-motivated terrorist attacks a target that represents an essential "other." Victims of religious terrorism are more fully dehumanized both in the minds of the terrorist perpetrators, and sometimes in the minds of the constituent populations or target

Table 1. Casualty rates of international terrorist attacks by type of group, 1968 to 2005

	Casualties (wounded and killed) per attack	Total number of attacks
Leftist ¹	9.82	2,240
Rightist ²	2.41	879
Nationalist-Separatist	9.06	2,041
Religious	38.10	809
Other ³	3.23	255

Source: Terrorism Knowledge Base (www.tkb.org).

¹Includes groups classified as "anarchist," "anti-globalizationist," "communist," "socialist," and "environmental."

²Includes groups classified as "racist," "right-wing conservative," and "right-wing reactionary."

³Includes apolitical, criminally-motivated groups.

audience (all co-religionists) of the terrorists as well. Because of this, attacks on soft targets that are more likely to yield high numbers of victims, for example civilians in a crowded public place, are more tolerable for religious terrorists and may be judged by the perpetrator to be unlikely to result in a backlash from supporters.⁵ Second, compared to secular terrorist groups that commit acts to generate sympathy with their cause locally or internationally, religious terrorists are less constrained by the desire to “win the hearts and minds” of an audience. They do not crave popular approval for their acts because they expect instead to obtain spiritual reward, making them even less inhibited when it comes to committing acts likely to yield high casualty rates.⁶ Third, religious terrorists declare war on entire societies, cultures, and political status-quos, not just on individual governments as is the case with secular terrorist groups.⁷ For religious terrorists all members of the target society are legitimate, including those that are most vulnerable, and this often results in tactical decisions to commit acts that produce large numbers of casualties.⁸ Finally, religious terrorists tend to see violence as an end unto itself rather than a means to an end. For them violence is a “purifying act,” a means of communication and a public demonstration of their fervor, drive and determination and sincere adherence to their ideology. Of course this makes high casualty attacks acceptable and even desirable and explains why extreme tactics such as suicide attacks are more prevalent among religious terrorists than secular terrorists.⁹

Islamism, Lethality, and Goal/Organizational Structure

Scholars also argue that the dramatic increase of radical Islamist terrorism starting in the 1980s and 1990s has significantly contributed to the lethality of terrorist attacks perpetrated by religiously-oriented terrorist groups.¹⁰ And there is descriptive empirical evidence that Islamist terrorist groups are indeed more lethal. Over the period 1968 to 2005, Islamist groups were responsible for 93.6% of all terrorist attacks by religiously-oriented groups and were responsible for 86.9% of all casualties inflicted by religiously-oriented terrorist groups. On average, attacks by non-Islamist groups produced 8.7 victims per incident while attacks by Islamist groups yielded 20.7 victims per attack.¹¹ Scholars point to doctrine and practice within Islam such as the concept of *lesser jihad*, the practice of militant struggle to defend Islam, or the Muslim reverence for *Istishhad*, the practice of martyrdom, to explain the higher frequency and intensity of terrorist activity among radical Muslims as compared to terrorists of other religions.¹²

This study subjects the assertion that the rise of Islamist terrorism is a significant reason for the growth of high-casualty terrorist attacks to quantitative and qualitative empirical scrutiny for the period 1998 to 2006. For the purposes of the study, Islamist terrorism is identified as terrorist attacks committed by groups that are primarily motivated by interpretations of Islamic political principles or by a Muslim religious and communal identity. These interpretations of principles and definitions of communal identities vary widely across Islamist groups.

For example, an Islamist terrorist group in Egypt might be motivated to replace a secular regime with one governed by Shari'a law. Or, an Islamist group in India might be motivated by a communitarian desire to protect Muslims perceived by the group to be mistreated or oppressed. It is important to note, however, that the term Islamism by itself refers generally to a whole constellation of political movements and actors world-wide, only a tiny highly radical subset of which engage in

acts of violence. My employment of the signifier “Islamist terrorism” is therefore interchangeable with terms used by other authors such as “Islamic terrorism” or “Islamic Fundamentalist terrorism.” The study tests a controversial hypothesis: Islamist groups that are not affiliated with the al-Qaeda network are *not* any more likely to commit high casualty terrorist attacks than other types of terrorist groups, specifically leftist, rightist, and national-separatist groups. This is because al-Qaeda type groups fit a typology defined as “universal/abstract” while other Islamist terrorist groups are more properly categorized as “strategic.” These different group typologies are accompanied by critical organizational and goal structure differences that determine the tactical behavior of terrorist groups; whether or not they use suicide attacks, whether or not they attack soft targets, and whether or not they are inhibited about attacking members of their same national or religious community.¹³ These tactical behaviors, in turn, help to determine lethality.

The primary difference between universal/abstract groups and strategic groups is that the former are distinguished by highly ambitious, abstract, complex, and nebulous goals that are driven primarily by ideology. The tactical objective of terrorist attacks launched by universal/abstract groups is more often communicative rather than military; a phenomenon referred to as “signaling” by Hoffman and McCormick.¹⁴ Terrorism is employed by universal/abstract groups to demonstrate to their constituents, opponents, and the world at large the level of commitment the group has to its cause and the purity of its struggle. Hoffman and McCormick also note that high-casualty attacks attract media attention which in turn allows the group to more widely communicate its message. Universal/abstract groups also tend to identify much larger, vague, frequently transnational and more ideologically-constructed communities on whose behalf they claim to commit attacks and audiences to whom they direct their messages by deed. They also typically have a distant or symbolic relationship with their communities and audiences that does not resemble the more pragmatically fashioned “representative-constituent” relationship that characterizes strategic groups. Because of these characteristics, they are much less inhibited when planning attacks. For example, a universal/abstract group of the leftist variety might use attacks to communicate to “the international working class” or to send a message to all “bourgeois capitalists.” The more conceptual nature of universal/abstract groups’ objectives, communities, and audience makes them less interested in a strategic use of attacks and less likely to fret about generating a public backlash; they are not as concerned about achieving an immediate and practical political objective or seeking approval from people less committed to the struggle than themselves. As a consequence of all of these attributes, these types of groups are more likely to deliberately perpetrate high-casualty attacks to draw attention to their message and demonstrate their determination.¹⁵

In contrast, strategic groups have much more limited and discrete goals: the liberation of specific territory, the creation of an independent homeland for a specific ethnic group, or the overthrow of a specific government. Terrorist acts launched by national-liberation or regime change-motivated groups are a strategic tool employed to force opponents to concede to concrete demands. These types of groups also have coherent and narrowly defined constituent populations on whose behalf they carry out the struggle—packaged as a tangible political good for their constituents—and on whom they often depend for support, financial and otherwise. Most importantly, unlike universal/abstract groups, they regard “winning the hearts and minds” of a constituent public and maintaining that public’s approval as critical to success of

the struggle. They also hope to eventually lure their opponents to the negotiating table. High-casualty attacks and other atrocities are risky and can always alienate constituents, generate a public backlash against the group, and prompt opponents to eschew negotiation and redouble efforts to confront the perpetrating group.¹⁶

Islamist terrorism encompasses both universal/abstract and strategic types of groups. The al-Qaeda terrorist network, a rather loose association of radical Salafist Islamist groups operating in many countries around the world that revere foundational members such as Saudi-born Osama Bin Laden, Egyptian-born Ayman al-Zawahiri, and the late Jordanian/Palestinian figure Abdullah Azzam and led by a transnational coterie of veterans of Islamist struggles around the world, is a quintessential universal/abstract terrorist movement. (A list of al-Qaeda affiliated groups that comprise the “al-Qaeda network” is contained in Appendix A.) It has a broad, ambitious, and highly ideological political agenda that includes unifying the Islamic world under a puritanical interpretation of Sunni Islam, the rejection of both secular rule and the institution of the nation-state in the Muslim world leading to the overthrow of all existing Muslim countries and the integration of all Muslim societies into a Caliphate, the liberation of Muslim territories from foreign occupation, and the use of holy war (lesser jihad) to bind Muslims together and lead them through a “clash of civilizations” that will rid the Muslim world of non-Muslim cultural and political influence. Al-Qaeda groups also tend to have a very narrow definition of what constitutes a proper Muslim, often rejecting Shi’is and Sufi Muslims as well as Sunnis who do not subscribe to the austere radical Salafist conception of Islamic practice and sources of authority.¹⁷ Many al-Qaeda affiliated groups do operate only in specific countries and do claim to represent the aspirations of specific Muslim peoples there, for example Jemah Islamiya in Indonesia, but all groups subscribe to a global and unified vision of Muslims and see the entire Muslim Umma (global community) as the benefactors of their activities, and the entire world as the audience to their attacks.¹⁸

In contrast, Hamas, an acronym for the “Islamic Resistance Movement” and the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, is functionally a national-liberation movement. It has a highly discrete and concrete objective: to create an independent Palestinian state out of Israel and the Palestinian territories it occupied in 1967.¹⁹ Its secondary objective is to ensure that an independent Palestinian state is governed by Islamic law (*shari’a*), but this is clearly subordinated to the more immediate goal of ending the Israeli occupation. It also has a discrete and limited constituent population, Palestinians and specifically those that live in the Occupied Territories, a specific opponent, the Israeli government, and a specific audience, Israeli society. It expresses nothing more than rhetorical affinity for Muslims and their struggles in other parts of the world.²⁰

The consequences of the features that differentiate Islamist groups like the al-Qaeda network from Hamas are manifested in the types of attacks launched by both groups and the casualty rates that follow. This is captured in Table 2.

Examined in the aggregate, Islamist groups are indeed more lethal and launch attacks that result in higher casualties than non-Islamist terrorist groups. However, when disaggregating Islamist groups affiliated with al-Qaeda from those that are not, it is evident that al-Qaeda affiliates perpetrate significantly more lethal attacks and are responsible for a disproportionate number of attacks and total casualties per group. This is consistent with empirical studies by Asal and Blum and Quillen that show a non-random clustering of high-casualty attacks perpetrated by al-Qaeda and

Table 2. Comparing terrorist groups, 1998 to 2005

	Number of groups	Number of attacks	Total number of victims	Mean number of victims Per attack
All Nationalist-Separatist Groups	180	2,540	17,188	6.9
All Leftist Groups	187	1,967	6,522	3.3
All Rightist Groups	19	120	623	5.1
All Islamist Groups	138	1,543	32,444	21.1
al-Qaeda-Affiliated Groups	32	678	24,460	36.1
non-al-Qaeda-Affiliated Groups	106	866	8,158	9.4
Other Groups	49	68	281	4.13
All Groups	473	4,718	45,150	9.7

Source: Terrorism knowledge base (www.tkb.org).

al-Qaeda-related terrorist groups, specifically the 1998 attacks on U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the 1999 attack on a Moscow apartment building,²¹ and the 2001 attacks in the United States on September 11th.²² These bits of evidence underline the pitfalls of adopting a monolithic view of Islamist terrorist groups and support the contention that there is a complex relationship between basic group ideological typology and lethality.

Analysis and Results

This paper employs sets of cross-national regression analyses along with a descriptive case study to test its hypothesis that the higher degree of lethality found in terrorist attacks launched by Islamist groups is largely due to the activity of al-Qaeda affiliated groups, a subset of Islamist groups distinguished by their radically different organizational and goal structures that conform to the universal/abstract overall structural group typology. The use of two analytical methodologies—one that is quantitative and cross-national and another that is descriptive and case-specific—improves confidence in the results and permits a “first cut” at developing an abstract theory on terrorist group lethality. The study is also careful to control for structural predictors of lethality.

Variables and Operationalization

All variables, their operationalization, and their sources are summarized in Table 3. The dependent variable in the analysis is the raw number of casualties, persons injured or killed, per individual attack from 1998 to 2005, the unit of analysis of the study. The database used for the study was built by the principal investigator with the help of two research assistants²³ using the web-published narratives of all terrorist attacks in the RAND corporation’s Terrorism Knowledge Base (TKB). The purpose of only using data from the time period 1998 to 2005 is that it includes both domestic and international incidents of terrorism, whereas data from previous

Table 3. List of variables, operationalization, and sources

Variable	Operationalization	Source
Number of Victims (DV)	Number of persons killed or wounded during the course of the incident	Terrorism Knowledge Database www.tkb.org
Islamist Group	Dummy variable coded "1" if the group perpetrating the incident is qualified by an Islamist or Islamic Fundamentalist political orientation.	Terrorism Knowledge Database www.tkb.org
Leftist Group	Dummy variable coded "1" if the group perpetrating the incident is qualified by a leftist, communist, socialist, anarchist, environmental, or animal liberation political orientation.	Ibid.
Rightist Group	Dummy variable coded "1" if the group perpetrating the incident is qualified by a rightist, conservative, or racist political orientation.	Ibid.
Nationalist-Separatist Group	Dummy variable coded "1" if the group perpetrating the incident is qualified by a nationalist, national liberationist, separatist, or irredentist political orientation.	Ibid.
al-Qaeda Affiliate?	Dummy variable coded "1" if the group perpetrating the incident is linked financially, organizationally, or ideologically to the al-Qaeda international terrorist network.	Ibid.

(Continued)

Table 3. Continued

Variable	Operationalization	Source
Universal/Abstract Group	Dummy variable coded “1” for terrorist groups that conform to the “universal/abstract” type.	Devised from Terrorism Knowledge Database www.tkb.org
Strategic Group	Dummy variable coded “1” for terrorist groups that conform to the (strategic” type.	Ibid.
Religious Difference	Dummy variable coded “1” if the perpetrator and victim are of different religions.	Ibid.
National Difference	Dummy variable coded “1” if the perpetrator and victim are nationals of different countries.	Ibid.
State-Sponsored	Dummy variable coded “1” if the perpetrating group has received financial or other support from a state.	Ibid.
Number of Competing Groups	Number of active terrorist groups that are competing for the support or attention of an audience or constituent population.	Terrorism Knowledge Database www.tkb.org
Press Censorship of Targeted Nation	Index from 0 to 100 indicating degree of press censorship in a country.	Reporters Without Borders, <i>Worldwide Press Freedom Index</i> . (various years). http://www.rsf.org/rubrique.php?id_rubrique=20
September 11th Attack Dummy	Dichotomous variable coded 1 for the three observations comprising the September 11th 2001 terrorist attacks in New York, Washington D.C., and Pennsylvania.	Terrorism Knowledge Database www.tkb.org

years (1968 to 1997) cover only international attacks.²⁴ The number of victims per attack in the database ranges from a high of 5,291 to a low of 0, with 48.7% of the total incidents yielding zero casualties, less than ten percent yielding 15 or more casualties and a mean of 9.71 casualties per attack.²⁵

There are seven main independent variables that are analyzed using three separate statistical models. The basic ideological orientation of the group perpetrating the attack is operationalized with four dichotomous variables: *Islamist Group*, *Leftist Group*, *Rightist Group*, and *Nationalist-Separatist Group*. The ideological orientation of the groups was determined using the Terrorism Knowledge Base's typological designations found in the individual terrorist groups descriptions and in the descriptions attached to the attack narratives. The assignment of these ideological classifications is collectively exhaustive but is not mutually exclusive. A minority of attacks is committed by groups that are characterized by more than one of these designations and are coded accordingly in the database. For example, attacks by Hamas are coded both as incidents perpetrated by an Islamist group and a nationalist-separatist group while attacks by the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) are coded as perpetrated by a leftist and a nationalist-separatist group.

The four main terrorist group ideological types are analyzed in the first statistical model and in the second model, a control variable labeled *al-Qaeda Affiliate* is added and is coded with a "1" for attacks perpetuated by groups that are regarded by the Terrorism Knowledge base to be members of the "al-Qaeda terrorist network." Finally, in the third model, the specific ideological type variables are included along with two variables used to code the general goal and organizational typologies—"universal/abstract" versus "strategic"—are added. Appendix A lists all terrorist groups included in the analysis sorted by their specific ideological affiliation and by their general goal and organizational typology.

Each of the models in the analysis include six control variables. *Religious Difference* is a dichotomous variable coded "1" for attacks in which the perpetrator and victim are members of different major religions,²⁶ while *National Difference* is a dichotomous variable coded "1" for attacks involving perpetrators and victims of different national origins. These two variables operationalize the role that conflict over religious and national identities plays in driving high-casualty terrorism and the expectation is that both are positive, significant predictors of casualty rates due to terrorism. This assumption is rooted in work by Kaufman that argues that violent inter-ethnic conflicts are qualified by higher civilian casualties and more frequent atrocities against civilians than other types of violent conflicts.²⁷ It is assumed that just like armed conflicts based on clashing ethnic identities involve combatants that dehumanize each other's constituent populations, so do conflicts based on clashing religious and national identities. Attackers in these circumstances do not discriminate between civilian and military targets, are often motivated by crude and immediate objectives such as seizing territory or "ethnic cleansing" (forcing the opposing group out of territory). Perhaps most importantly, conflicts involving clashing core identities relieve combatants from the normal standards of approval from their constituent communities, thus permitting atrocities. All of these features explain the high rates of casualties that characterize national and religious-based armed conflict. *Religious Difference* and *National Difference*, furthermore, test the findings of recent scholarship indicating that transnational terrorist groups are more likely than domestic groups to engage in high-casualty type attacks, including chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear attacks.²⁸

State-sponsored is another dichotomous variable coded “1” for attacks in which the perpetrating group is supported by a government, financially or otherwise. Because there are normative costs for “mainstream” political actors who support illegal political violence and those costs are generally increased relative to how “atrocious” an individual episode of political violence is—which can be measured in part by the number of people killed or injured in the episode—and assuming that most states are generally loathe to incur such costs, *State-Sponsored* is expected to be a negative predictor of the casualty rate. States, seeking to preserve their public image, might choose to fund more discrete and restrained terrorist activity that does not generate large, lethal attacks.

Number of Competing Groups is an interval-level variable that counts the number of other terrorist groups that are contemporary rivals of the perpetrating group for the incident. Terrorist groups that share their constituent population with many other groups against whom they compete for notoriety and media attention are theoretically more likely to commit more atrocious attacks to distinguish themselves within a crowded field and demonstrate their authenticity or determination vis-à-vis rival groups. Bloom observed this phenomenon with the proliferation of rival Palestinian groups in the 1980s and 1990s in the Occupied Territories. *Number of Competing Groups* is expected to be a positive predictor of casualties.²⁹

The study also controls for the degree of press freedom characterizing the country in which the attack occurred, using a variable named *Press Censorship of the Targeted Nation* measurement derived from an additive index produced by Reporters without Borders. Inclusion of this variable is required for two reasons. First, there is intuitive reason to suspect that the degree of local press censorship might drive the tactical decisions of terrorist group. Groups operating in countries with significant levels of press censorship might launch particularly damaging, high-casualty attacks in order to compel local media to cover the event or to capture international media attention by “going over the heads” of local censored media.³⁰ The logic is that large and outrageous attacks are more difficult to censor or ignore. Second, from a methodological standpoint it is especially critical to include a measurement of press freedom as a control given Sandler’s observation that terrorism databases built using open-source media reporting potentially undercount domestic terrorist events that occur in countries with state-controlled or otherwise compromised media.³¹

Finally, *September 11th Attack Dummy* is included in all models to address potential outlier effects of the three, unusually high-casualty terrorist events that occurred in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania on September 11th, 2001.

Results

The variables are analyzed using three negative binomial regression models, the results of which are summarized in Table 4. Because the dependent variable, the number of casualties in a terrorist attack, contains no observations that may include negative values, and because the distribution of the values is uneven across the observations in a nonrandom manner, clustering in places around some observations, an ordinary least-squares regression analysis is not the most efficient analytical model to use and a negative binomial model is, instead, recommended.³² The results of the three models support the hypotheses of the paper: Islamist groups are not more prone to launching high casualty attacks than other ideological types of groups, once al-Qaeda-affiliation is controlled for, and groups with

Table 4. The effect of ideological group type on casualties due to terrorism, negative binomial regression models

	1	2	3
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Islamist Group	.553 (.198)**	.292 (.177)	.465 (.157)**
Leftist Group	−1.061 (.177)***	−.992 (.184)***	−.990 (.186)***
Rightist Group	.223 (.444)	.277 (.453)	.252 (.465)
National-Separatist Group	−.609 (.162)***	−.516 (.156)***	−.476 (.164)**
al-Qaeda Affiliate		.655 (.274)*	
“Universal/Abstract” Group			.662 (.276)**
“Strategic” Group			.317 (.398)
Religious Difference	.886 (.143)***	.912 (.145)***	.948 (.141)***
National Difference	.352 (.171)*	.293 (.149)*	.307 (.154)*
State-Sponsored	−.149 (.185)	.045 (.162)	−.047 (.155)
Number of Competing Groups	−.020 (.004)***	−.022 (.004)***	−.025 (.004)***
Press Censorship of Targeted Nation	.035 (.003)***	.033 (.003)***	.035 (.004)***
September 11th Attack Dummy	4.433 (.839)***	4.109 (.868)***	4.240 (.899)***
Constant	1.010 (.232)***	.992 (.232)***	.620 (.424)
N	4,676	4,676	4,676
Wald χ^2	446.81	457.78	544.22

Robust standard errors in parentheses. ***indicates significance at .000 level;

**at .01 level and *at .05 level.

universal/abstract goals and organization structures are significantly more likely to engage in high-casualty attacks than are strategic groups.

When examining the role played by the ideological type of the perpetrating group, it is clear that, indeed, Islamist groups are significantly more likely to launch higher casualty attacks (as demonstrated in model 1). However, when affiliation with the al-Qaeda terrorist network is controlled for (model 2), Islamist groups are no more likely than non-Islamist groups to commit higher casualty attacks. Leftist groups and national-separatist groups are actually less likely to commit high casualty attacks, while rightist groups are no more or less likely to commit attacks with high numbers of victims. Model 3 includes variables designating terrorist group goal and organizational typologies, producing findings that support for the study's hypothesis. All groups designated as “universal/abstract,” al-Qaeda affiliated and otherwise, are indeed more likely to commit high casualty attacks, while “strategic” groups, which include a fair number of Islamist groups, are no more or less likely to commit attacks with larger numbers of casualties.

Several of the control variables are consistently significant across all of the models. *Religious Difference* and *National Difference* are both found to be significant positive predictors in all three of the models, producing some support for the contention that incidents featuring a clash of identities yield higher casualty rates as well as

the empirical observation that transnational groups are more likely to commit high-casualty attacks. Confounding the expectations of Bloom, instances of terrorism perpetrated by groups that have a lot of competition from rival groups are significantly *less* likely to yield higher casualties, the exact opposite of scholarly expectation.³³ Finally, across all three models, *Press Censorship of Targeted Nation* is a significant, positive predictor of casualty rates, indicating that terrorist attacks in countries with high levels of press censorship are more likely to have higher casualties while the dummy variable for the 9/11 attacks is also significant.

The Case of Iraq 1998 to 2005: Two Types of Islamist Terrorism

These statistical findings lend support to the paper's hypothesis that some types of terrorist groups are strategic political actors that calculate the application of violence in the service of their objectives, recognize the need to both maintain legitimacy in the eyes of their constituents, financiers, and the larger international community and to give incentives for their adversaries to negotiate and agree to meet their demands. As strategic political actors, they are not excused from the ordinary constraints faced by all social movements as well as governments. Indeed many of them regard themselves as embryonic governments who plan to transition to political struggle once armed struggle has been completed. These constraints on their tactical behavior register in the lethality of their attacks. The results also support the contention that while some Islamist terrorist groups fit the above model, others are significantly more prone to orchestrate higher casualty attacks because they fit the aforementioned universal/abstract type and display a lack of tactical constraint due to their differing ideology, objectives, and relation to constituents and audiences.

The hypothesis is further validated when it is applied to the case of Islamist terrorist activity in Iraq from 1998 to 2005. The case of Iraq has many characteristics that make it a highly appropriate test case.³⁴ It exhibits a high frequency of terrorist attacks during the time period—455 incidents that could be attributed to a particular group³⁵ from 2003 to 2005, of which 72% were perpetrated by Islamist groups. The casualty rate of terrorist incidents in Iraq vary greatly by attack, ranging in number of victims from zero to 338 victims, with a mean number of victims per attack of 17.9. Approximately 50% of all attacks in Iraq involved zero to three victims while approximately 20% involved 20 or more victims. Terrorist groups in Iraq employ a wide diversity of tactics, from kidnappings to armed attacks to suicide bombings. Since the 2003 invasion of Iraq that deposed the Ba'athist regime of Saddam Hussein and the ensuing occupation by United States and coalition troops, attacks in Iraq feature perpetrators and victims that are of the same nationality and religion, attacks by Iraqis on foreigners and foreign troops, attacks on non-Muslims as well as incidents involving foreign perpetrators. Finally, a diversity of terrorist groups were active in Iraq during the time period including secular Iraqi nationalist groups largely composed of Sunni Arabs, some of which contain former Ba'ath party officials, secular nationalist Iraqi and Turkish Kurdish groups and Islamist groups.³⁶ Finally, the body of Islamist groups active in Iraq is large and quite diverse and can be crudely divided into three categories: groups comprised of militant Iraqi Sunni Muslims that seek to force the occupying forces out of Iraq and the imposition of (Sunni) Islamic Shari'a upon the removal of foreign troops; groups comprised of radical Iraqi Shi'is that seek to compel coalition forces to leave Iraq while also retaliating for assaults on or desecrations of Shi'i holy places;³⁷ and a smaller collection of groups of foreign-born

Muslims and Iraqi nationals who are affiliated, either formally or informally, with the larger global al-Qaeda network and who seek to defeat the occupation, impose a strict, Salafist Islamic government in Iraq as a stepping stone towards the eventual construction of a multinational Islamic caliphate while launching attacks against other Muslims, notably the Shi'a, who fail to adhere to austere Salafist principles.

These three different categories of Islamist groups are qualified by different levels of activity, tactical methods, and lethality rates, and Table 5 illustrates these differences.

First, the al-Qaeda affiliates are responsible for the lion's share of total attacks during the time period, 277 out of 327 or 84.7% of the total, though only a small number of Islamist groups active in Iraq are al-Qaeda affiliated, while non-al-Qaeda Sunni groups are responsible for only 12.8% of the attacks and Shi'i groups are responsible for a very small number of attacks, only 2.4%.³⁸ Second, while accounting for only one-third of all attacks by Islamist groups, al-Qaeda groups were responsible for 95.9% of all casualties due to Islamist terrorism and attacks by al-Qaeda affiliates resulted in four times the number of casualties per attack than non-al-Qaeda groups. Third, the gross inequity in lethality rates may be partially explained by the much more frequent use of suicide attacks by al-Qaeda affiliates versus other groups.³⁹ As previously mentioned, suicide terrorism yields much higher casualty rates. Finally, the groups can be differentiated by their choice of target. Al-Qaeda groups in Iraq launched a significantly *lower* number of attacks against both non-Muslims and non-Iraqis. While both Iraqi Sunni and Shi'i groups targeted non-Muslims 45 to 55% of the time, and nationals of other countries 58 to 65% of the time, al-Qaeda affiliated Islamist groups focused their attacks on fellow Muslims (84.6% of the time) and on nationals of Iraq (58.3% of the time).

The different tactical decisions, which result in different lethality rates, made by Islamist terrorist groups in Iraq that are al-Qaeda affiliated versus non-al-Qaeda Iraqi Sunni and Shi'i groups are products, I argue, of organizational and ideological features of the group types themselves. The al-Qaeda affiliates in Iraq are multinational in terms of activities, membership, and motivation and tend to either be organizations that pre-exist the 2003 invasion of Iraq or are spin-offs of such organizations or include members of pre-existing organizations. In contrast, all of the non-al-Qaeda Sunni and Shi'i groups are composed exclusively of nationals of Iraq and were formed in the wake of the 2003 invasion. These organizational features help to reinforce the different objectives that the al-Qaeda and non-al-Qaeda groups pursue. Many of the key figures in the al-Qaeda groups, for example the former Jordanian-born terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, are veterans of the Soviet Afghan war of the 1980s and have been involved in previous terrorist acts in Western countries and against pro-Western governments in the Islamic World. They view Iraq as an opportunity to confront United States hegemony much in the same way they persevered in the "jihad" against the Soviet Union. In conducting attacks in Iraq they hope to demonstrate their determination to confront the power and influence of the non-Muslim west, they aim to propagate and popularize their radical Salafist ideology, and they intend to confront secularism within the Muslim world while unifying and purifying the Umma and attacking heterodox sects of Islam like Shi'ism.⁴⁰ Ejecting foreign troops and influencing the new Iraqi government are mere side concerns. Furthermore, the poor status of security in Iraq allows these groups to act with greater impunity than they would be able to in countries they have previously operated in, such as Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Russia. Like Somalia

Table 5. Comparing islamist groups in iraq, 1998–2005

	Number of groups	Number of attacks	Total number of victims	Mean number of victims per attack	Percentage of attacks that are suicide attacks	Percent attacks against non-muslims	Percent attacks against non-iraqis
al-Qaeda Affiliated Groups	12	277	5,978	21.6	39.5	16.4	41.7
Non-al-Qaeda Affiliated Groups	36	50	251	5.0	6.0	46.5	62.5
Sunni Groups (non-al-Qaeda)	30	42	215	5.1	6.7	45.9	65.0
Shi'i Groups	6	8	36	4.5	0.0	50.0	58.3
All Iraqi Islamist Groups	48	327	6,229	19.0	14.0	38.9	57.3

and Afghanistan, which are other (failed) states in which al-Qaeda groups maintain an active presence, Iraq provides a much less costly venue for propaganda by deed. Subsequently, Iraq is merely a good venue for their attacks, the goal of which is communication to an audience that transcends the Iraq debacle. The consequence of these features is that al-Qaeda groups are more likely to engage in high-casualty modes of terrorism—namely suicide bombings—and are uninhibited about attacking Iraqi nationals and other Muslims.⁴¹

The non-al-Qaeda groups share a less ambitious objective: the removal of occupying troops, first and foremost, and the Islamisation of the new Iraqi government. Their use of armed struggle serves a more immediate political goal and, for some groups is accompanied by provision of social and political services to their constituents. Baram explains that many Sunni Islamist insurgents are themselves former Ba'ath party supporters. Others are members of tribal groups who were former crucial allies with the Saddam Hussein government that turned to militant Islamism when the United States overthrew, and thus discredited, the Ba'ath regime, ended Iraqi government subsidy to their clan leaders, and cut off lucrative smuggling routes to Jordan and Syria.⁴² In general, both the Sunni and the Shi'i groups function basically as national-liberation movements and they also aspire, post-liberation, to influence legitimate political life, perhaps by using the political capital produced by participating in the highly popular resistance to the foreign occupation and by creating and maintaining an armed wing. As such, they are constrained by the desire, and need, to win the hearts and minds of ordinary Iraqis, on whose behalf they conduct violent acts of resistance. These groups more strictly limit their activities to the occupiers themselves, or to Iraqis that collaborate with the occupation forces. And, their attacks are far more restrained than those launched by al-Qaeda affiliates. Furthermore, they tend to commit a wide range of non-lethal acts as well, namely kidnappings, as these are also a source of revenue.⁴³ Finally, Baram helps to flesh out a key ideological difference between the al-Qaeda affiliated groups and the nonaffiliated Islamist groups operating in Iraq that has implications for immediate and long-term tactical decisions that the groups make.⁴⁴ Iraqi Sunni Islamist groups are heavily influenced by the writings of Muhammad Ahmad al-Rashid, the seminal figure of the Iraqi Muslim Brotherhood, who while espousing a radical Islamization of the Iraqi government and noting the eventual necessity of violent struggle (jihad) to achieve this goal also blessed pragmatic political action as a means to fulfill objectives. It should also be noted that the key radical Islamist figure for Iraqi Shi'is, Muqtada al-Sadr, leader of the Mahdi Army and the son of famed Shi'i cleric Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, has alternately utilized terrorist attacks against coalition forces along with electoral political action, cooperation with the current government of Iraq and nonviolent political bargaining to promote his objectives: a removal of foreign troops from Iraq and the construction of an Islamic theocracy in Iraq similar to that found in Iran. The pragmatism of Iraqi Sunni and Shi'i groups stands in stark relief to the al-Qaeda affiliates who Baram explains rather are motivated by the example of Sayyid Qutb, the radical intellectual of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the 1950s who condemned the influence of secularism, nationalism, and other Western ideals and cultural practices that had filtered into the Muslim world and advocated a violent, global resistance to them, as well as Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab, an eighteenth century Muslim preacher from the Najd region of Arabia who advocated a violent cleansing of Islam from the impurities of heterodox Islamic belief and practice.⁴⁵

Together with the organizational differences and goal structures, these ideological differences help to explain the different tactical behaviors of the Islamist groups in Iraq and also yield some indication of the chances of the success of counterterrorism efforts. Nonaffiliated Sunni and Shi'i groups are capable of pragmatism, and this quality affects the lethality rates of their attacks. They are using political violence to leverage discrete concessions from political actors. Whether or not it is advisable, it is certainly conceivable that they could be encouraged to desist their terrorist attacks in exchange for a removal or significant draw-down of foreign troops or greater political access. However, the al-Qaeda affiliated groups are wedded to an inflexible political agenda—one that is difficult to conceive of a rapprochement for. "To please [the radical Salafis] any future government would need to be both viciously against the United States and rabidly for Taliban-style Islam."⁴⁶ For them, political violence is a process of cleansing and is testimony to the purity of their belief. The immediate political objective is less important.

Conclusion

This study and its results have implications both for antiterrorism policymaking as well as for current and future scholarly research on terrorism. It weds cross-national, large-n statistical analysis with descriptive case study analysis. This enhances confidence in the findings produced by showing them to be universally rooted across terrorist groups while also defensible in the context of a single case. The study provides a more nuanced and complete picture of Islamist terrorism, demonstrating that it is not a monolithic phenomenon either at the global level or at the level of an individual case. More generally, the study illustrates the relationship between organizational and ideological features of terrorist groups and their tactical behavior, but cautions that this relationship tends not to conform to the broad categories, such as "Islamist" and "leftist," used by most scholars.

The results of the study may suggest to policymakers and to intelligence and security officials that group type is a possible tool to use when determining the distribution of finite counterterrorism resources. Rather than adopting a blanket approach to all Islamist terrorist movements, counterterrorism policy might devote special attention to groups fitting the universal/abstract type noted in the analysis as they are most likely to commit high-casualty attacks. Politicians and security officials might also more consider, given the results of the study, that in addition to more standard policing and military responses, there are avenues for reaching political accord with strategic Islamist groups, given their goal structures. The utility of this latter course is argued by a recent RAND Corporation report which notes that since 1968 most terrorist campaigns with the group entering into the political process rather than being eliminated by security agents.⁴⁷

However, questions remain. It is likely that terrorist groups differentiated by the categories used in this study—universal/abstract goal structure versus strategic—display other consistent behavioral differences in addition to lethality. Future research might examine the relationship between the goal structure typology utilized by this study and target selection, investigate the political, sociological, and economic factors that determine the goal structure of a particular terrorist group or could evaluate the effectiveness of various antiterrorism policies for both of the group types.

Appendix A: Ideological and Organization/Goal Structural Classification of Terrorist Groups

Islamist Groups

al-Qaeda Affiliated Groups: Abu Hafs Brigade, Abu Sayyaf, Abdurajak Janjalani Brigades, al-Bara Min Malek, al-Islambouli Brigade, al-Qaeda, al-Qaeda in Arabia, al-Qaeda Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers, Ansar al-Islam, Ansar al-Sunna Army, Asbat al-Ansar, Battalion of the Martyr Abdullah Azam, Brigades of the Mujahideen, East Turkistan Liberation Army, Eritrean Islamic Jihad, Gama'a Islamiya, Islamic Army in Iraq, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jaish al-Taifa al-Mansoura, Jemaah Islamiya, Jenin Martyrs Brigade, Jund al-Sham, Lashkar e-Jhangvi, Military Wing of the Greater Syrian Army, Mujahideen without Borders, Riyad us-Saliheyn, Salafia Jihadia, Salafist Group for Call and Defense, Saraya Usud al-Tawhi, Takfir wa-Hijra, Taliban, Tawhid and Jihad.

Non-al-Qaeda Affiliated Groups: Aben Abyan Islamic Army, Abu Abbas, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Ahmadia Muslim Mission, al-Ahwal Brigades, al-Arifeen, al-Madina, al-Mansoorain, al-Nasireen, al-Barq, al-Farouk Brigades, al-Fursan Brigades, al-Haramayn Brigades, al-Intiqami al-Pakistani, al-Islah, al-Jihad Brigades, al-Qanoon, al-Umar al Mujahideen, Ali Bin Abu Talib Jihad Organization, Ansar al-Din, Ansar Allah, Ansar al-Jihad, Armed Islamic Group, Army of Sunni Islam, Asif Raza Commandos, Bersatu, Brigades of the Victorious Lion of God, Daghestan Liberation Front, Death Squad of the Mujahideen, Divine Wrath Brigade, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Free Aceh Movement, Front for the Defenders of Islam, Green Brigade of the Prophet, Harakat al-Shahuda'a, Harakat Ul-Mujahidin, Harkat ul-Jihad, Hezbollah, Hikmatul Zihad, Hisba, Hizbi-Islami, Hizbul Mujahideen, Islamic Defense Forces, Islamic Jihad, Islamic Jihad Jerusalem, Islamic al-Waqqas Brigades, Islamic Front for Iraq Resistance, Islamic Glory Brigade, Islamic Great Eastern Raiders Front, Islamic Movement of Holy Warriors, Islamic Rage Brigades, Islamic Resistance Brigades, Islamic Shashantantra Andolon, Israeli Arab Islamic Movement, Hamas, Jagrata Muslim Janata, Jaish e-Muhammad, Jamiat al-Mujahideen, Jaish al-Muslimeen, Jamatul Mujahideen, Jihad Brigades, Jihad Committee, Jihad Pegah, Jund Allah Organization, Karbala Brigades, Kata'ib al-Junayd al-Jihadiya Liberation Party, Laskar Jihad, Lashkar i-Omar, Lashkar e-Taiba, Mahdi Army, Mohammed's Army, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Movement for the Struggle of Jordanian Islamic Resistance, Movsar Baryayev Gang, Mujahideen Army, Mujahideen Division, Mujahideen KOMPAK, Mujahideen Message, Mujahideen in Iraq, Muslim United Army, Muslims Against Globalization, New Pattani United Liberation Army, Ninawa Mujahideen in the City of Mosul, Nusantara Islamic Jihad, Parbatya Chattagram, Partisans of the Sunni, Pattani United Liberation, Protectors of Islam, Popular Resistance Committees, Salah al-Din Battalions, Saad Bin Abi Waqas Brigade, Saif al-Muslimeen, Saraya al-Shuada, Shurafa al-Urdun, Students of the Islamic Movement of India, Sword of Islam, The Holders of the Black Banners, The Group for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, United Tajik Opposition, Usd Allah, Uygur Holy War Organization, World Islamic Jihad, Young Liberators of Pattani, 1920 Revolutionary Brigades, 313.

Leftist Groups

15 May, 21 June Organization, Action Directe, Action Group Extreme, Akhil Krantikari, Alex Boncayao Brigade, Anarchist Attack Group, Anarchist Faction, Anarchist Liberation, Anarchist Street Patrol, Anarchist Struggle, Anarkhiki, Angry Brigade, Animal Liberation Front, Anti-Authoritarian Erotic Cells, Anti-Mainstream Self Determination, Anti-Olympic Flame, Anti-Power Struggle, Anti-Racist Nuclei, Anti-State Action, Anti-State Defense, Anti-State Nuclei, Anticapitalist Attack Nuclei, April 19th Movement, Armed Revolutionary Action, Armed Youth of Cherkha-ye Fedayee, Army of the People of Venezuela, Autonomous Cells of Rebel Action, Autonomous Revolutionary Action, Autonomous Decorators, Black and Red Brigades, Black Star, Bolivarian Guerilla Movement, Bolivarian Liberation Forces, Burning Path, Carapaica Revolutionary Movement, CAV, Chaotic Attack Front, Che Guevara Anti-Imperialist Front, Children of Fire, Chukakuha, Coalition to Save the Preserves, Comando Jaramillista, Combatant Proletarians, Commando Anarchist Group, Communist Liberation, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), Communist Party of Nepal, Communist Revolution, Communist Workers Movement, Conscientious Arsonists, Consciously Enraged, Construction of the Fighting Communist Party, Cooperative of Handmade Fire, Dario Santillan Command, DHKP-C (Turkey), Earth Liberation Front, Ecuadorian Rebel Force, Enraged Proletarians, Fighters for Freedom, Fighting Ecologist Activism, Fighting Guerrillas of May, Fires of Hell, First of October Antifascist Movement, Five C's, For a Revolutionary Perspective, Francs Tireurs, Freedom for Mumia Abu Jamal, FUAC, Group for Social Resistance, Group of Carlo Giuliani, Group of Guerilla Combatants of Jose Maria Morales, Group of People's Fighters, Group of Popular Communist Revolution, Group Revolutionary Front, Guevarista Revolutionary Army, Immediate Action, Indominable Marxists, Informal Anarchist Front, International Solidarity, Irish National Liberation Army, Islamic Great Eastern Raiders Front, Jaime Bateman Cayon Group, Janashakti, July 20th Brigade, Justice Army of Defenseless People, Kakurokyo, Kangleipak Communist Party, Knights of the Torch, Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), Laiki Antistasi, Latin American Patriotic Army, Leftist Nucleus, Liberating Communists, Maoist Communist Center, Mariano Moreno National Liberation Front, May-98, Melting Nuclei, Midnight Saboteurs, Movement Against State Arbitrariness, Movement for Democracy, Movement of the Revolutionary Left, Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO), National Liberation Army (Colombia), New People's Army, New Revolutionary Alternative, November's Children, Nuclei for Promoting Communism, People's Defense Forces, People's Liberation, People's National Congress, People's Revolutionary Army, People's United Liberation Front, People's War Group, PKK-Kongra Gel (Kurdish People's Congress), Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Popular Liberation Army, Popular Resistance Front, Popular Revolutionary Front, Proletarian Combatants, Proletarian Nuclei for Communism, Proletarian Reprisal, Proletarian Resistance, Proletarian Solidarity, Pueblo Reagrupado, Purbo Banglar Communist Party, Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan, Red Brigades, Red Guerrillas, Red Line, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Revolutionary Army, Revolutionary Cells, Revolutionary Front, Revolutionary Leninists, Revolutionary Liberation, Revolutionary Memory, Revolutionary Nuclei, Revolutionary Organization, Revolutionary People's Army, Revolutionary Perspective, Revolutionary Proletarian Initiative, Revolutionary Socialists, Revolutionary Struggle, Revolutionary

Subversives, Revolutionary Torch-Holders, Revolutionary Youth, Rigas Fereos, Russian National Bolshevik Party, Shining Path, Solidarity for Political Prisoners, Solidarity Gas Canisters, Solidarity with 17 November, The Anarchists, The Committee for the Promotion of Intransigence, The Inevitables, The National Anti-Corruption Front, The Tigers, Tippagarh Dalam, TKEP/L (Turkey), TKP/ML-TIKKO (Turkey), Torrid Winter, Tupac Amaru, Tupamaro Revolutionary Movement, Turkish Peoples Liberation Front, Uncontrolled Rage, United Liberation Front, United Revolutionary Front, United Tajik Opposition.

Rightist Groups

Accolta Nazinuale, Anti-Communist Command, Anti-Zionist Movement, Army of God, Clandestine Corsican Movement, Ethnocacerista, Free Vietnam Revolutionary Movement, God's Army, Kach, Kenkoko Giyugun Chos, Macedonian Dawn, Movement of the Fifth Republic, National Armed Force, National Warriors, Night Avengers, Northern League, People Against Gangsterism, Resistenza Corsa, Russian National Unity, Self Defense Forces of Colombia, UNITA, United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, United Self Defense Forces of Venezuela, White Legion.

Nationalist-Separatist Groups

1920 Revolutionary Brigade, Abu Abbas, Abu al-Rish, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Accolta Nazinuale, Adivasi Cobras, al-Ahwal Brigades, al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, al-Arifeen, al-Badr, al-Bara Min Malek, al-Barq, al-Farouk Brigades, al-Fatah, al-Fursan Brigades, al-Jihad, al-Jihad Brigades, al-Madina, al-Mansoorain, al-Mujahideen, al-Nasireen, al-Qaeda Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers, al-Umar, Albanian National Army, Ali Bin Abu Talib Jihad, All Tripura Tiger Force, Ansar al-Din, Ansar al-Islam, Ansar al-Jihad, Apo's Revenge Hawks, Apo's Youth Revenge, Arab People's Dem Front, Armata Corsa, Armata di Liberazione, Army of Sunni Islam, Army of the Corsican People, Badr Forces, Bagramyan Battalion, Baloch Liberation Army, Basani Revolusi Nasi, Basque Fatherland and Freedom, Battalion of the Look Out for Iraq, Bersatu, Birsa Commando Force, Black Panthers, Black Widows, Bodo Liberation Tigers, Borok National Council, Breton Revolutionary Front, Brigades for the Defense of the Holy Shrines, Brigades of Imam al-Basri, Brigades of the Martyr Ahmad Yassin, Brigades of the Mujahideen, Brigades of the Victorious, Catholic Reaction Force, Clandestini Corsi, Continuity IRA, Corsican Patriotic Front, Corsican Revolutionary Armed Forces, Cypriot Nationalist Organization, Dagestan Liberation Army, Death Squad of Mujahideen of Iraq, Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, Dima Halam Daoga, Divine Wrath Brigade, Doku Umarov, East Turkistan Liberation Front, Fallujah Mujahideen, Free Aceh Movement, Free Papua Movement, Free Vietnam Revolutionary Group, Front di Liberazione, Gazteriak, Gora Euskadi Askatat, Green Brigade of the Prophet, Hamas, Harakat Ul-Mujahidin, Harkat ul-Jehad, Hawk Brigades, Hawks of Thrace, Hezbollah, Hizbul Mujahideen, Imam Hussein Brigade, Independent Kashmir, Indigenous Peoples Front, Iparretarrekk, Iraqi Legitimate Resistance, Irish National Liberation Army, Irish Republican Army, Islamic al-Waqqas Brigade, Islamic Army in Iraq, Islamic Jihad, Islamic Movement of Iraq, Islamic Rage Brigade, Islamic Resistance Brigade, Israeli Arab Islamic Movement, Jaish al-Taifa al-Mansoura, Jaish e-Muhammad, Jamiat

al-Mujahideen, Jeay Sindh, Jenin Martyrs Brigade, Jihad Brigades, Jihad Pegah, Kanglei Yawol Kana Lup, Kangleipak Communist Party, Karbala Brigades, Karbi Longri Resistance, Karenni National Progressive Party, Kata'ib al-Junayd al-Jihadiya, Kayin National Army, Knights of the Tempest, Kosovo Liberation Army, Kuki Liberation Army, Kuki Revolutionary Army, Kurdish Democratic Party, Kurdistan Freedom Hawks, Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), Lashkar e-Jhangvi, Lashkar i-Omar, Lashkar e-Toiba, Liberation Party, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Macheteros, Mahdi Army, Martyr Abu-Ali Mustafa, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Moro National Liberation Front, Movsar Baryayev Gang, Muadh Ibn Jabal Brigade, Mujahadi Bayt al-Maqdis, Mujahideen al-Mansooran, Mujahideen Army, National Democratic Front of Bodoland, National Kurdish Revenge Teams, National Liberation Front of Tripura, New Pattani United Liberation Organization, Ninawa Mujahideen in the city of Mosul, Omar bin al-Khattab, Oromo Liberation Front, Padanian Armed Separatists, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Partisans of the Sunni, Pattani United Liberation Organization, People's Defense Forces, PKK/KONGRA-GEL, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Popular Resistance Council, Protectors of Islam, Rappani Khalilov, Rasul Makacharipov, Real Irish Republican Army, Resistenza Corsa, Revenge of the Hebrew Babies, Riyad us-Saliheyn Martyr's Brigade, Saad Bin Abi Waqas Brigade, Salah al-Din Battalion, Saraya al-Shuada al-Jihadiya fil Iraq, Saraya Usud al-Tawhid, Sardinian Autonomy Movement, Save Kashmir Movement, Shurafa al-Urdun, South Maluku Republic, Sri Nakharo, Sword of Islam, Swords of Righteousness, Takfir wa Hijra, Tanzim, Tawhid and Jihad, The Group for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, The Holders of the Banner, Tibetan Independence Movement, United Kuki Liberation Front, United Liberation Front of Assam, United National Liberation Front, Usd Allah, Uygur Holy War Organization, Young Liberators of Pattani, Yunadi Turchayev, Zomi Revolutionary Army.

Criminal Groups

Ali Bin-Falah, Caucasian Front for the Liberation of Abu Achikob, Mara Salvatruchas, Muadh Ibn Jabal Brigades, Vitalunismo.

Goal/Organizational Classification of Groups

Strategic: 1920 Revolutionary Brigade, Abu Abbas, Abu al-Rish, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Accolta Nazinuale, Adivasi Cobras, al-Ahwal Brigades, al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, al-Arifeen, al-Badr, al-Bara Min Malek, al-Barq, al-Farouk Brigades, al-Fatah, al-Fursan Brigades, al-Jihad, al-Jihad Brigades, al-Madina, al-Mansoorain, al-Mujahideen, al-Nasireen, al-Qaeda Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers, al-Umar, Albanian National Army, Ali Bin Abu Talib Jihad, All Tripura Tiger Force, Ansar al-Din, Ansar al-Islam, Ansar al-Jihad, Apo's Revenge Hawks, Apo's Youth Revenge, Arab People's Dem Front, Armata Corsa, Armata di Liberazione, Army of Sunni Islam, Army of the Corsican People, Badr Forces, Bagramyan Battalion, Baloch Liberation Army, Basani Revolusi Nasi, Basque Fatherland and Freedom, Battalion of the Look Out for Iraq, Bersatu, Birsa Commando Force, Black Panthers, Black Widows, Bodo Liberation Tigers, Borok National Council, Breton Revolutionary Front, Brigades for the Defense of the Holy Shrines, Brigades of Imam al-Basri, Brigades of the Martyr Ahmad Yassin, Brigades of the

Muhjahideen, Brigades of the Victorious, Catholic Reaction Force, Clandestini Corsi, Continuity IRA, Corsican Patriotic Front, Corsican Revolutionary Armed Forces, Cypriot Nationalist Organization, Dagestan Liberation Army, Death Squad of Mujahideen of Iraq, Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, Dima Halam Daoga, Divine Wrath Brigade, Doku Umarov, East Turkistan Liberation Front, Fallujah Mujahideen, Free Aceh Movement, Free Papua Movement, Free Vietnam Revolutionary Group, Front di Liberazione, Gazteriak, Gora Euskadi Askatat, Green Brigade of the Prophet, Hamas, Harakat Ul-Mujahidin, Harkat ul-Jihad, Hawk Brigades, Hawks of Thrace, Hezbollah, Hizbul Mujahideen, Imam Hussein Brigade, Independent Kashmir, Indigenous Peoples Front, Iparretarrek, Iraqi Legitimate Resistance, Irish National Liberation Army, Irish Republican Army, Islamic al-Waqqas Brigade, Islamic Army in Iraq, Islamic Jihad, Islamic Movement of Iraq, Islamic Rage Brigade, Islamic Resistance Brigade, Israeli Arab Islamic Movement, Jaish al-Taifa al-Mansoura, Jaish e-Muhammad, Jamiat al-Mujahideen, Jeay Sindh, Jenin Martyrs Brigade, Jihad Brigades, Jihad Pegah, Kanglei Yawol Kana Lup, Kangleipak Communist Party, Karbala Brigades, Karbi Longri Resistance, Karenni National Progressive Party, Kata'ib al-Junayd al-Jihadiya, Kayin National Army, Knights of the Tempest, Kosovo Liberation Army, Kuki Liberation Army, Kuki Revolutionary Army, Kurdish Democratic Party, Kurdistan Freedom Hawks, Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), Lashkar e-Jhangvi, Lashkar i-Omar, Lashkar e-Toiba, Liberation Party, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Macheteros, Mahdi Army, Martyr Abu-Ali Mustafa, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Moro National Liberation Front, Movsar Baryayev Gang, Muadh Ibn Jabal Brigade, Mujahadi Bayt al-Maqdis, Mujahideen al-Mansooran, Mujahideen Army, National Democratic Front of Bodoland, National Kurdish Revenge Teams, National Liberation Front of Tripura, New Pattani United Liberation Organization, Ninawa Mujahideen in the city of Mosul, Omar bin al-Khattab, Oromo Liberation Front, Padanian Armed Separatists, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Partisans of the Sunni, Pattani United Liberation Organization, People's Defense Forces, PKK/KONGRA-GEL, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Popular Resistance Council, Protectors of Islam, Rappani Khalilov, Rasul Makacharipov, Real Irish Republican Army, Resistenza Corsa, Revenge of the Hebrew Babies, Riyadh us-Saliheyn Martyr's Brigade, Saad Bin Abi Waqas Brigade, Salah al-Din Battalion, Saraya al-Shuuda al-Jihadiya fil Iraq, Saraya Usud al-Tawhid, Sardinian Autonomy Movement, Save Kashmir Movement, Shurafa al-Urdun, South Maluku Republic, Sri Nakharo, Sword of Islam, Swords of Righteousness, Takfir wa Hijra, Tanzim, Tawhid and Jihad, The Group for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, The Holders of the Banner, Tibetan Independence Movement, United Kuki Liberation Front, United Liberation Front of Assam, United National Liberation Front, Usd Allah, Uyгур Holy War Organization, Young Liberators of Pattani, Yunadi Turchayev, Zomi Revolutionary Army, 15 May, 21 June Organization, 313, Abu Sayyaf Group, Action Directe, Action Group Extreme, Ahmadiya Muslim Mission, Abdulrajak Janjalani Brigade, Akhil Krantikari, al-Haramayn Brigades, al-Qanoon, al Nawaz, Alex Boncayao Brigade, Amal, Ansar al-Sunna Army, Anti-Communist Command, April 19th Movement, Armed Forces Revolutionary Command, Armed Islamic Group, Armed Revolutionary Left, Armed Youth of Cherikha-ye Fedayee, Army of the People of Venezuela, Asbat al-Ansar, Asif Raza Commandos, Babbar Khalsa International, Bangladesh Nationalist Party, Bolivarian Guerilla Movement,

Bolivarian Liberation Forces, Cambodian Freedom Fighters, Carapaica Revolutionary Movement, Chukakuha, Comando Jaramillista, Committee for the Security of the Highways, Communist Party of India-Maoist, Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist, Communist Workers Movement, Dario Santillan Command, DHKP-C, Ecuadorian Rebel Force, Eritrea Islamic Jihad, Ethnocacerista, First of October Antifascist Resistance Group, Free People of Galilee, Front for Defenders of Islam, Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave, FUAC, Gama'a Islamiya, God's Army, Group of Guerilla Combatants of Jose Maria Morales, Group of Peoples Fighters, Group of Popular Combatants, Guevarista Revolutionary Army, Harakat al-Shua'ada al-Islamiya, Hezbollah, Hikmatul Zihad, Hindu National Union, Hisba, Hizb-I-Islami, Iduwini Youths, Indian Intelligence, Islami Chhatra Shibi, Islamic Defense Forces, Islamic Glory Brigades, Islamic Great Eastern Raiders Front, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Islamic Shashantantra Andolon, Jagrata Muslim Janata, Jaime Bateman Cayon Group, Jaish al-Muslimeen, Jamatul Mujahideen, Janashakti, Jihad Committee, Justice Army of Defenseless People, Kach, Kakurokyo, Kenkoko Giyugun Chos, Kurdish Democratic Party, Latin American Patriotic Army, Lord's Resistance Army, Loyalist Volunteer Force, Macedonian Dawn, Maoist Communist Center, Mara Salvatruchas, Mariano Moreno National Liberation Commandos, Military Wing of the Greater Syrian Army, Mohajir Qami Movement, Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad, Movement for the Struggle of the Jordanian Islamic Resistance, Movement of the Fifth Republic, Movement of the Revolutionary Left, Mujahedin-e-Khalq, Mujahideen Division Khandaq, Mujahideen KOMPAK, Mujahideen Message, Muttahida Qami Movement, National Armed Forces, National Army for the Liberation of Uganda, National Liberation Army, National Warriors, New People's Army, Night Avengers, November's Children, Nusantara Islamic Jihad Forces, Odua Peoples' Congress, Orange Volunteers, Parbatya Chattagram, People's Liberation Army, People's National Congress, People's Revolutionary Army, People's United Liberation Front, People's War Group, People Against Gangsterism, Popular Liberation Army, Popular Revolutionary Action, Popular Self-Defense Forces, Protesting Miners, Pueblo Reagrupado, Purbo Banglar Communist Party, Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan, Red Guerrillas, Red Hand Defenders, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Revolutionary Subversives, Revolutionary Torch-Bearing Run, Revolutionary United Front, Revolutionary Youth of Ecuador, Russian National Bolshevik Party, Russian National Union, Saif ul-Muslimeen, Salafist Group for Call and Defense, Self Defense Groups, Shining Path, South Londonderry Volunteers, Students of the Islamic Movement of India, Sudan Peoples Liberation Army, Taliban, The Inevitables, The National Anti-Corruption Front, Tigers, Tippagarh Dalam, TKEP/L, TKP/ML-TIKKO, Tupac Amaru, Tupamaro Revolutionary Movement, Turkish Peoples Liberation Front, Ulster Defence Association, Ulster Volunteer Force, Underground Government for the Free Democratic People of Laos, UNITA, United People's Democratic Solidarity, United Revolutionary Front, United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, United Self-Defense Forces of Venezuela, United Tajik Opposition, Vigorous Burmese Students, White Legion.

(338 Groups, 4,335 Incidents)

Universalist/Abstract: Aden Abiya Islamic Army, Abu Hafs Brigade, Abu Nayaf al-Afghani, al-Intiqami al-Pakistani, al-Islah, al-Islambouli Brigade, al-Qaeda, al-Qaeda in Arabia, Ali bin-Falah, Anarchist Attack Group, Anarchist Attack Teams,

Anarchist Faction, Anarchist Liberation, Anarchist Street Patrol, Anarkhiki, Angry Brigade, Animal Liberation Front, Ansar al-Islam, Ansar Allah, Anti-Authoritarian Erotic Cells, Anti-Mainstream Self Determination, Anti-Olympic Flame, Anti-Power Struggle, Anti-Racist Nuclei, Anti-State Action, Anti-Zionist Movement, Anticapitalist Attack Nuclei, ANVC, Army of God, Autonomous Cells of Rebel Action, Autonomous Revolutionary Action, Autonomous Decorators, Battalion of the Martyr Abdullah Azam, Black and Red Brigade, Black Star, Burning Path, Coalition to Save the Preserves, Combatant Proletarian Nucleus, Commando Anarchist Group, Communist Liberation, Communist Revolutionaries of Europe, Conscientious Arsonists, Consciously Enraged, Construction of the Fighting Communist Party, Cooperation of Hand Made Fire, Earth Liberation Front, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Enraged Proletarians, Fighters for Freedom, Fighting Ecologist Activism, Fighting Guerillas of May, Fires of Hell, First of October Antifascist Group (GRAPO), Five Cs, For a Revolutionary Perspective, Franks Tireurs, Freedom for Mumia Abu Jamal, Friendship Society, Global Intifada, Group for Social Resistance, Group of Carlo Giuliani, Group Revolutionary, Immediate Action, Indominable Marxists, Informal Anarchist Front, International Solidarity, Jemaah Islamiya, Jihad in Sweden, July 20th Brigade, Jund al-Sham, Jund Allah, Knights of the Torch, Laiki Anastasi, Lashkar Jihad, Leftist Nucleus, Liberating Communists, May 98, Melting Nuclei, Midnight Saboteurs, Mohammed's Army, Movement against State Arbitrariness, Muslim United Army, Muslims Against Global Oppression, New Revolutionary Alternative, Nuclei for Promoting Total Catastrophe, Nusantara Islamic Jihad, Overthrown Anarchists, Popular Justice, Popular Resistance, Popular Revolutionary Front, Proletarian Combatant Groups, Proletarian Nuclei for Communism, Proletarian Reprisal, Proletarian Resistance, Proletarian Solidarity, Red Brigades, Red Line, Revolutionary Army, Revolutionary Brigades, Revolutionary Cell, Revolutionary Front, Revolutionary Leninist Brigades, Revolutionary Liberation, Revolutionary Memory, Revolutionary Nuclei, Revolutionary Offensive Cells, Revolutionary Organization 17, Revolutionary People's Army, Revolutionary People's Front, Revolutionary Perspective, Revolutionary Proletarian Initiative, Revolutionary Socialists, Revolutionary Solidarity, Revolutionary Struggle, Revolutionary Violence Group, Salafia Jihadia, Societa Editoriale, Solidarity for Political Prisoners, Solidarity Gas Canisters, Solidarity with 17 November, Supporters of Horst Ludwig Meyer, Tawhid and Jihad, Tawhid Islamic Brigade, Territorial Anti-Imperialist Nuclei, The Anarchists, The Committee for the Promotion of Intransigence, Thus Far and No Further, Torrid Winter, Totally Anti-War Group, Ummah Liberation Army, Uncontrolled Rage, World Islamic Jihad.

(135 Groups, 383 Incidents)

Notes

1. Source: Terrorism Knowledge Base (www.tkb.org).
2. Bruce Hoffman, "Terrorism Trends and Prospects," in Ian O. Lesser, Bruce Hoffman, John Arquilla, David Ronfeldt, Michael Zanini, and Brian Michael Jenkins, eds., *Countering the New Terrorism* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation), 7–38.
3. Chris Quillen, "A Historical Analysis of Mass Casualty Bombers," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 25 (2002): 279–292; Peter Chalk, "The Evolving Dynamic of Terrorism in the 1990s," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 53, no. 2 (1999): 151–167; Hoffman,

“Terrorism Trends and Prospects” (see note 2 above); Jessica Stern, *The Ultimate Terrorists* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Ashton Carter, John Deutch, and Philip Zelikow, “Catastrophic Terrorism,” *Foreign Affairs* 77 (1998): 80–94.

4. Note data for Tables 1 and 2 is for international terrorism only, rather than for domestic and international terrorism as is the case in the main empirical models of the study. This is data-driven: The Terrorism Knowledge Base (TKB), the source for the data, collects data on domestic terrorist attacks only after 1997. The purpose of Tables 1 and 2 is to illustrate a broadly conceived observation that different types of groups commit terrorist attacks with different levels of lethality while the results of the main analysis (Table 4) show the persistence of this finding in the face of more rigorous analysis.

5. Eli Berman and David Laitin, “Rational Martyrs Versus Hard Targets: Evidence on the Tactical Use of Suicide Attacks,” in E. Meyerson, ed., *Suicide Bombing from an Interdisciplinary Perspective* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Mia Bloom, “Devising a Theory of Suicide Terrorism,” *Dying to Kill: The Global Phenomenon of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Mark Juergensmeyer, “Terror Mandated By God,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9 (1997): 16–23.

6. Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, “Is Transnational Terrorism Becoming More Threatening?: A Time-Series Investigation,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44, no. 3 (2000): 307–332; Stern, *The Ultimate Terrorists* (see note 3 above); Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Bruce Hoffman, “The Confluence of International and Domestic Trends in Terrorism,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9 (1997): 1–15.

7. However, there are some examples of secular leftist terrorist movements active during the Cold War period such as the Red Army Faction in Germany or the Japanese Red Army whose rhetoric of “People’s War” declared the entire capitalist political and economic system to be an enemy and a target.

8. Enders and Sandler, “Is Transnational Terrorism Becoming More Threatening?” (see note 6 above).

9. Bruce Hoffman and Gordon McCormick, “Terrorism, Signaling and Suicide Attack,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 27 (2004): 243–281; Enders and Sandler, “Is Transnational Terrorism Becoming More Threatening?” (see note 6 above); Stern, *The Ultimate Terrorists* (see note 3 above). Though Robert Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005) observes that suicide attacks are by no means limited to religiously-oriented terrorist groups.

10. Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (see note 6 above); Hoffman, “Terrorism Trends and Prospects” (see note 2 above); David C. Rapoport, “Sacred Terror: A Contemporary Example from Islam,” in Walter Reich, ed., *Origins of Terrorism, Psychological, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, 1998); Richard Chasdi, “Middle East Terrorism 1968–1993: An Empirical Analysis of Terrorist Group-Type Behavior,” *The Journal of Conflict Studies* 17, no. 2 (1997); Juergensmeyer, “Terror Mandated By God” (see note 5 above).

11. Source: Terrorism Knowledge Base (www.tkb.org).

12. John L. Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York: Modern Library, 2003); Martha Crenshaw, “Suicide Terrorism in Comparative Perspective,” Unpublished Paper Prepared for Countering Suicide Terrorism, an International Conference, International Policy Institute of Counter-Terrorism (2002: 1–21); Amir Taheri, *Holy Terror: Inside the World of Islamic Terrorism* (Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler, 1987).

13. James A. Piazza, “A Supply-Side View of Suicide Terrorism,” *Journal of Politics* 70, no. 1 (2008).

14. Hoffman and McCormick, “Terrorism, Signaling and Suicide Attack” (see note 9 above).

15. Piazza, “A Supply-Side View of Suicide Terrorism” (see note 13 above).

16. Piazza, “A Supply-Side View of Suicide Terrorism” (see note 13 above).

17. Christopher Blanchard, “Al Qaeda: Statements and Evolving Ideology,” *CRS Report for Congress*, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress (2006).

18. As pointed out to the author by an anonymous reviewer, terrorist groups like the al-Qaeda network operate on a different foundational plane than do many other Islamist terrorist groups and this is as related to organizational features of the network as it is to its ideological framework. The al-Qaeda “network” today includes a patchwork of loosely

coordinated cells, some of which work independently, further undermining the strategic coherence of the movement as a whole.

19. This is according to Hamas' 1988 charter, which has never been officially amended. However, in recent years Hamas has indicated a willingness to consider accepting a Palestinian state comprising only the West Bank and Gaza Strip with Jerusalem as its national capital. More recently, in 2007 Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal publicly acknowledged that the State of Israel's existence was a "matter of fact" and pledged to diplomatically recognize it upon the creation of a separate Palestinian state while also indicating that an amendment of the 1988 charter was a future possibility. Sean Maguire and Khaled Oweis, "Hamas Leader Says Existence of Israel is a Reality," *Reuters*, 10 January, 2007.

20. Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, "Preface," *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence and Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

21. Although it should be noted that controversy remains about the identity of the perpetrators of these events.

22. Victor Asal and Andrew Blum, "Holy Terror and Mass Killings?: Reexamining the Motivations and Methods of Mass Casualty Terrorists," *International Studies Review* 7, no. 1 (2005): 153–155; Quillen, "A Historical Analysis of Mass Casualty Bombers" (see note 3).

23. The author wishes to express thanks to Belal F. Hamdan and Rodney D. Harris for their critical assistance in collecting and coding the data used in this study.

24. Limiting the analysis to the time period of 1998 to 2005 is obviously sub-optimal and it would be preferable to have a wider range of years of data to increase the total number of observations and to more fully capture long-term transformations in terrorist group activity. However, the RAND-TKB database is the most appropriate source of data for this study because it is the most inclusive count of total—domestic and international (transnational)—events and is the most reliable source on events. Most studies use databases that cover more years but include only international events, thus limiting themselves to an estimated 5 to 10 percent of total events worldwide, introducing significant selection biases and damaging the validity of interpretation of results. See Alberto Abadie, "Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism," Unpublished Manuscript, Harvard University and the National Bureau of Economic Research (2004): 1–4; Gary LaFree and Laura Dugan, "How Does Studying Terrorism Compare To Studying Crime?" in Matthew DeFlem, ed., *Terrorism and Counterterrorism: A Criminological Perspective* (New York: Elsevier, 2004): 2; Ted Robert Gurr, "Empirical Research on Political Terrorism: The State of the Art and How It Might be Improved," in Alex Schmid and A.J. Jongman, eds., *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Databases, Theories and Literature* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1998), 174; Bruce Hoffman and Donna K. Hoffman, "The Rand-St. Andrews Chronology of International Terrorism 1994," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7, no. 4 (1995): 180. Furthermore, other major sources of terrorism suffer from critical limitations including regional limitations, missing data, unsystematic coding schemes and political bias and manipulation. See Gary LaFree and Laura Dugan, Heather V. Fogg, and Jeffrey Scott, "Building a Global Terrorism Database," National Institute of Justice, Document 2002-DT-CX0001. (2006): 2.

25. It should be noted that all quantitative studies based on open-source, event-count databases of terrorism potentially suffer from two sorts of limitations: First, some types of attacks or attackers—for example, attacks launched by international perpetrators—are more likely to be included in the data than others. Second, a significant percentage—in the case of the Rand TKB data, a majority—of the events are not attributed to a particular terrorist group. These limitations necessarily mar the reliability of the sample and perhaps impair the ability of the researcher to make confident conclusions based on the data. These problems, however, are not unique to the RAND TKB data or this study and they lend support to the methodological strategy featured in this work of combing a large cross-national quantitative study with a qualitative case study.

26. Note that *Religious Difference* does not code incidents involving perpetrators and victims that are members of different sects of a world religion, for example Catholics and Protestants, with a "1." This is because the terrorist attack narratives included in the TKB database do not consistently report the inter-sectarian affiliations of attackers and victims. This data limitation furthermore reinforces the utility of the Iraq qualitative case study, in which Sunni Muslim versus Shi'i attacks are examined.

27. Chaim Kaufman, "When All Else Fails: Ethnic Population Transfers and Partitions in the Twentieth Century," *International Security* 23, no. 2 (1998): 120–156; Chaim Kaufman, "Intervention in Ethnic and Ideological Civil Wars: Why One Can Be Done and the Other Can't," *Security Studies* 6, no. 1 (Autumn 1996): 62–100.

28. Kate Ivanova and Todd Sandler, "CBRN Attack Perpetrators: An Empirical Analysis," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 3, no. 4 (2007): 273–294.

29. Bloom, "Devising a Theory of Suicide Terrorism" (see note 5 above).

30. Crenshaw, "Suicide Terrorism in Comparative Perspective" (see note 12 above).

31. Todd Sandler, "On the Relationship Between Democracy and Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 12, no. 2 (1995): 97–122.

32. For reference see Patrick T. Brandt, John T. Williams, Benjamin O. Fordham, and Brian Pollins, "Dynamic Models for Persistent Event Count Time Series," *American Journal of Political Science* 44, no. 4 (2000): 823–43; Adrian Colin Cameron and P.K. Trivedi, *Regression Analysis of Count Data* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Gary King, "Statistical Models for Political Science Event Counts: Bias in Conventional Procedures and Evidence for the Exponential Poisson Regression Model," *American Journal of Political Science* 32, no. 3 (1988): 838–863.

33. Bloom, "Devising a Theory of Suicide Terrorism" (see note 5 above).

34. One potential problem with using Iraq as a qualitative case is that the intense political instability that characterizes the country after 2003 makes it difficult to discern terrorist activity from political violence resulting from insurgency or sectarian strife. This is, of course, a generic problem within terrorism studies and would be present in many other country cases (for example, Lebanon, Colombia, India, or Philippines). The purpose of selecting Iraq as a case study is to afford the researcher an opportunity to analyze a large pool of diverse manifestations of Islamist terrorism rather than to speak to the much deeper theoretical question about what distinguishes terrorism from insurgency or civil war.

35. The total number of incidents in Iraq between 2003 and 2005, including those not attributed to a specific terrorist group, were 3,340. Source: Terrorism Knowledge Base (www.tkb.org)

36. Information on groups operating in Iraq is derived from the Terrorism Knowledge Base (www.tkb.org).

37. It is important to note that the range of years for the case study, and for the main statistical analysis, is 1998 to 2005 and that during this time period, Shi'i political violence was mainly limited to terrorist attacks against foreigners in Iraq or Iraqis perceived as collaborating with foreigners against Shi'i interests. This time frame does not include the events of 2006 and beyond, which witnessed a substantial increase in Sunni-Shi'i sectarian violence and a reduction in terrorist and insurgent activity with the formation of the so-called Awakening Movements led by Sunni sheiks in al-Anbar province. Were the case study to be extended through 2006 it would be necessary to adopt a more complex view of Shi'i political violence, particularly that attributed to the Mahdi Army, a group led by the radical Shi'i leader Muqtada al-Sadr.

38. Though the number of Shi'i attacks are likely understated in 2005 due to the large number of non-attributed attacks and certainly comprise a much larger percentage of total terrorist attacks in Iraq in 2006 as the sectarian conflict intensified.

39. The observation that al-Qaeda-affiliated groups are more likely to engage in suicide attacks and are, perhaps by extension, more likely to engage in higher casualty attacks is also born out when looking at the cross-national data used for the main statistical analysis. While only 6.8% of all attacks committed by all types of groups in the dataset were suicide attacks, 22.4% of al-Qaeda affiliated attacks were suicide attacks. (Islamist groups in general conducted suicide attacks in 13.9% of the observations while non-al-Qaeda-affiliated, non-Muslim groups conducted suicide attacks in a mere 3.9% of the observations.) Attacks by al-Qaeda groups in the cross-national data also resulted in significantly higher casualty rates than attacks by all other types of groups: an average of 32.8 victims per attack for al-Qaeda affiliates as opposed to 20.9 for all Islamist groups, 9.1 for all groups, and 5.3 for non-Islamist, non-al-Qaeda groups.

40. "Declaration of Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi at the Execution of Nicholas Berg." English translation of Arabic original. 13 May, 2004. Available online at: <http://www.uga.edu/islam/zarqawi.html>; Christopher M. Blanchard. 2005. "Al-Qaeda: Statements and Evolving

Ideology.” *CRS Report for Congress*. 4 February. Available online at: <http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/RL32759.pdf>; Michael Scheurer. 2005. “Coalition Warfare Part III: How Zarqawi Fits Into Bin Laden’s World Front,” *Terrorism Focus* 2, no. 8.

41. Pape, *Dying to Win* (see note 9 above); U.S. Congressional Research Service, “Al-Qaeda: Profile and Threat Assessment,” Report for Congress (17 August 2005); Matthew Levitt, “Untangling the Terror Web: Identifying and Counteracting the Phenomenon of Crossover Between Terrorist Groups,” *SAIS Review* 24, no. 1 (Winter-Spring 2004): 33–48; Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

42. Amatzia Baram, “Who Are the Insurgents?: Sunni Arab Rebels in Iraq,” United States Institute of Peace, Special Report 134 (April 2005).

43. Timothy Haugh, “Analysis of Sunni-Based Opposition in Iraq,” *Strategic Insights* 4, no. 5 (2005); James A. Russell, “Strategic Implications of the Iraqi Insurgency,” *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 8, no. 2 (2004); Ahmed S. Hashim, “The Insurgency in Iraq,” *Small Wars and Insurgency* 14, no. 3 (Autumn 2003): 1–22.

44. Baram, “Who Are the Insurgents?” (see note 42 above).

45. Baram, “Who Are the Insurgents?” (see note 42 above).

46. Baram, “Who Are the Insurgents?” 14 (see note 42 above).

47. Seth Jones and Martin Libicki. *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qaeda*. (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2008).