PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISTS

by

Kellen E. Story

An Abstract
of a thesis presented in partial fulfillment
for the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science
in the department of Criminal Justice
University of Central Missouri
May, 2014
Public Perception of Religious Extremists

ABSTRACT

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This paper will seek to explain and discover if there is any correlation between what the general public thinks of religious extremists as related to terrorism. First, it needs to be determined if there is a history of any religious belief, media, or social influence to affect the public’s idea as to what a religious extremist is and does, whether positive or negative. Second, it needs to be determined if the public has a positive view of religious extremists (as related to terrorism). Finally, it needs to be determined if law enforcement (local, state, federal) either does a great job at educating the public sector about religious extremists or if law enforcement needs to be educating more so as to avoid confusion or fear by the public in regards to misinformation related from any other source.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The 9/11 attacks raised awareness of religious extremists all over the nation, with a special emphasis on the Islamic religion. In one day Americans were suddenly aware of a looming enemy targeting the young western nation. The greater threat was how to handle the idea of religious extremists and their actions against the citizens of the United States. Fast forward over a decade later and we are still struggling to learn to handle those who push their religion to the extreme.

Specifically, law enforcement at each level faces the every day challenges of thwarting terrorist threats and plans as well as an added daily crime load. Whether it is a specialized unit at a larger urban police department or the Department of Homeland Security, law enforcement deals with terrorists on some level or another. The greater question lies in what the general public thinks of as a religious extremist. While it is a well known fact that religion is one of the avenues that leads to terrorism, it may not be well known as to what a religious extremist actually is. Is an extremist a Christian who attends church four times a week? Is it a Christian that wears no make-up, never cuts their hair, and only wears skirts? Or is a religious extremist someone who bombs an abortion clinic or maybe someone who is willing to kill themselves in the name of Allah? Or is it quite simply a person who wears a turban and originates from the Middle East?

This is related to law enforcement on a level that supersedes that of the daily officer and transcends into the role of the analyst. Discovering motivations and various warning signs may help to discover trends that lead to extreme religious violence. While this is being put to work and has been since the 9/11 attacks, we still don’t understand the concept of religion to the daily
person. This is such a crucial component of the terrorism study on multiple levels as it can help to alleviate profiling on police departments as well as help the public to understand a little more about these motivations and warning signs.

This brings a new thought to ponder, is it law enforcement’s job to ensure that the public knows the basics of what a religious extremists is? The same question can be answered with another question: Is it law enforcement’s job to ensure the public knows the basics of what a serial killer’s MO is? This question will be discussed and developed further in a later section; however, when it is put in this light the idea becomes more of a reasonable thought. Law enforcement by no means needs to start educating the public about religions and their beliefs and histories; yet law enforcement should be educating about possible warning signs and possible, maybe even particularly violent, sects of religions that may pose a threat to the people.

This research developed around three crucial questions. One of them has already been stated, and that is if law enforcement should have any role in educating the public about religious extremists. The main focus question, and the one that creates the problems with the other two questions, is if a person really knows what a religious extremist is and what they as a person believe. Since the times of Rodney King we have seen that profiling is wrong and we as people would be wrong to profile even those whom we think are terrorists. For instance, a family of devout Islamic beliefs moves next door to the typical white American family after the Boston bombings. Is that family going to profile based upon the appearance of turbans, a burka, and other traditional Islamic garb? Would that family automatically assume terrorist based upon their lifestyle, clothes, and skin color? These are crucial questions, especially when we are talking about terror in the name of religion. While both are extremely dangerous, a known drug house and a known terrorism house are two very different decks of cards.
The second question that will be explored pertains to social media and its effect on the minds of average people. Does social media have an impact on their thoughts and beliefs, especially toward religion? Turning the TV to any major news program will instantly subject a person to many opinionated discussions about all sorts of religious ideas and actions. For the purposes of this study, social media is identified as television, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, public blogs and any other type of major information sharing center. If the media does have an impact (which we know that the media does impact people and help control majority opinion), then we need to better understand the bias that the media may be creating while also seeking to understand how to use the media to educate the public about religious threats. The media could be a very large tool for law enforcement at every level for the progression of community policing and greater awareness if used correctly.

The final question in this research seeks to understand public opinion about police response in regards to attacks by religious extremists. For instance, was the response to the Boston bombings efficient in the eyes of the everyday American? With growing violence and never-ending unrest in the Middle East making headlines each day, it seems tantamount that the police would seek to garner positive feedback regarding their response or potential response to a terrorist threat. Understanding what the public may think is crucial to seeking where a department may be lacking in the eyes of the community as well as what actions the department may need to take in order to either promote the truth or put a new policy in place. Terrorist attacks begin on a local level, generating local police response. Therefore, discovering the public’s opinion about police response could help a police department either promote their trainings and responses or could help get the department better training in preparation for a possible response. We must remember
that it was not federal agents who responded to the World Trade Center bombings or the Boston Bombings; rather it was the local police.

These questions create the standard for the research, however, the backbone of this study seeks to truly understand the perceptions of the public in regards to religious extremists. The view that policing actually starts with the public through observation and accurate reporting do not change when it comes to religious extremists; however, it is hard to find information that will directly discuss religions in general related to violence. For instance, many fusion centers and even U.S. Department of Homeland Security aggressively promote the seven signs of terrorism (or even break it down into smaller lists), yet many of these are portrayed toward Islamic threats. A study conducted by the Global Research Center (2013) showed that only 2.5% of all acts of terror on U.S. soil were carried out by Muslims. This is strikingly different than what the media and many of the law enforcement agencies messages portray. Therefore, when we are seeking to get public support to help in identifying terrorists, it would almost seem that we are only seeking Islamic terrorists, not any other kind! This research is very important to add to the growing knowledge of public opinion related to bias created by a wrong view of what religious extremists really are. Simply put, this research is needed on multiple levels not only to understand the thoughts and opinions of the public, but also to determine proper education, training, and response by law enforcement everywhere.

With this is mind, it is important to note that many similar studies have been conducted on a large scale, but few have accurately identified just what the public thinks about a religious extremist or a terrorist, specifically identifying the term “religious extremist” or “terrorist” with a group of people. This research could uncover information to help law enforcement agencies better educate the public on the general threat, demeanor, and warning signs of terrorists as well as
how to be better prepared, instead of targeting one group and labeling them. Some of these will be reflected and discussed as well. Reference will be made to existing studies and their conclusions about religious extremists, the public, and the relationship between the media and the police.

From this point, we need to understand the two largest religions and their violent tendencies in the United States. We will cover Islam and Christianity in this reference due to their competing popularity and the availability of information from recent attacks. For each religion, a quick overview of past religious violence will be covered and then we will dive into the public’s opinion about both religions and their subsequent violence. It is very important that we look at this overview as each attack has the potential to change the public’s opinion for good or for bad regarding that particular religion, extremists in general, and the police response and actions taken.

After an assessment has been made about the two religions, one must be made about the media and how their stories affect public views of terrorism; and then one final section covering educational materials and endeavors presented by various law enforcement agencies (both federal and local).

The final part of this study will cover the methodology and the results for this particular study. All information will be presented and covered as well as related to the findings of other studies on this topic.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Large scale attacks from groups foreign to the United States are a relatively new trend. Before 2001, there were only a few large scale attacks on American soil, including the American Revolution, the War of 1812, Pearl Harbor, and the World Trade Center attacks of 1993. The more interesting part is that none of these attacks created near the fear nor the awakening of the American people that the 9/11 attacks had. The 9/11 attacks also had a greater impact than the previous ones had: it was motivated by religious ideologies. The War of 1812 was simply an advancement by a young and growing US nation; likewise, Pearl Harbor had the feel of a terrorist attack, but based on definition was an act of war. The first World Trade Center bombings were carried out by Al-Qaeda, yet it did not carry the same weight as the toppling of the towers in 2001.

Acts of terror by homegrown individuals is a completely different story, however. There are plenty of mass murderers and killers in the United States short history, but terror plots are less plenty and until September 11th, harder to categorize. The most profound example of terrorism and probably the first act of terrorism in the United States (according to modern definition) could be the Boston Tea Party and the subsequent revolt against Great Britain that lead to the birth of the modern day United States. Aside from these we have seen various bombings that could be categorized as terrorism. The purpose of this research shies away from politically motivated terrorism and focuses more on religious terrorism; therefore many acts of terror committed for political purposes may be left out. We will dive as deep as possible into the motivation, attack, public response, and police response of several different attacks either on US soil or against the US.
The Global Research Center (2013) has noted that there have been around 104,000 terrorist attacks since 1970 with about 2,400 of these being in the United States. Moreover, the Global Research Center (2013) further notes that only about 7% of these attacks were motivated by religion. These are extremely interesting numbers, especially considering the amount of media attention religious violence receives. These numbers will be broken down more in a later section, but serve as the framework for this research. If only 7% of these attacks were motivated by religion, then why is there so much controversy and fear surrounding religious terrorism? It is important to note that the 2,400 attacks included various kinds of terrorist attacks (i.e. KKK violence is considered terrorism in this research).

The Federal Bureau of Investigation published an article in early 2002 that provided much insight on terrorism up to the 9/11 attacks. The FBI states that while terrorism declined in the 90’s; a steady increase happened up to the 9/11 attacks (Watson, 2002):

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*Figure 1: Terrorist attacks by year.*

These numbers show that we were vastly underprepared for the 3,000+ (mostly civilian) victims claimed in the 9/11 attacks (Watson, 2002). The more interesting part about these numbers is that prior to 9/11, the U.S. was dealing with primarily domestic threats that consisted of crime on a much smaller level, nothing like the violence (kamikaze style) portrayed by Al-Qaeda’s hatred for the US (Watson, 2002). It is clear that the FBI needed to understand the violent attitude from Middle-Eastern Jihadists since the 2003 bombing of the World Trade Center. Simply put, the fear surrounding religious extremism (and somewhat of a partial answer to the question posed above) shows that such a devastating attack left the American people stunned that
any people, much less in the name of religion, would ever perpetrate an attack of such magni-
tude, especially when the greatest concern for the FBI were domestic groups such as the Animal
Liberation Front (ALF) and the Environmental Liberation Front (ELF) and foreign threats thou-
sands of miles away (Watson, 2002).

Attacks such as these have done nothing but create an unrealistic sense of fear among the
people of the United States. It is this point alone that proves that those in law enforcement must
do a better job at educating people about terrorism and religious extremists. Fear is an unfortu-
nate (yet intended) side-effect of religious violence and terrorism, but as these numbers will
show, this type of fear does not have to be as great as it is. So, while the 9/11 attacks did alter the
American perception toward terrorism as well as awaken the American public to a serious threat,
it also caused a sense of fear among the American people that is a little outrageous. As we con-
tinue to study terrorism and religious extremism, it is important to understand that fear has a
great role to play in what a person may believe. As a crude example, an individual should never
be too afraid to drive through a predominantly Islamic part of a city without first having solid
numbers regarding crime or terrorist activity in that certain area.

According to a study conducted by the University of Albany, researchers found that 36%
of the respondents feared being a victim of a terrorist attack (Gaines & Kappeler, 2012). People
feared having their car stolen or broken into and home burglary a small margin higher than being
a victim of terrorism (Gaines & Kappeler, 2012). The more disturbing part about this survey is
that people feared being victimized by terrorists marginally higher than they did being sexually
assaulted or murdered (Gaines & Kappeler, 2012). This is extremely interesting given the likeli-
hood of one being murdered or sexually assaulted is much more likely than being a victim of a
terrorist attack (Gaines & Kappeler, 2012). In 2011 alone, there were about 14,600 people mur-
dered in the United States (FBI.gov). While the September 11th attacks only killed around 3,000, the attack seemed to create a level of fear far greater than the American criminal ever could.

In looking at worldwide statistics for terrorist attacks, there were about 10,000 for 2011 (US Dept. of State, 2012). In these attacks, there were only about 12,000 people killed (US Dept. of State, 2012). The global total in 2011 of people killed due to terrorism was around 2000 persons lower than the number of people murdered in the United States alone. It is important to note that Islamic terrorists were the perpetrators in the majority of these attacks around the world (US Dept. of State, 2012).

This fear was also garnered by a sense that we do not readily know who the threat is or where it may come from next. Comparing and contrasting Pearl Harbor and 9/11 shows a very large difference in response from the American people. After Pearl Harbor, we knew the enemy and knew how to attack back; after 9/11, we did not readily know the enemy and were not sure how to counter this attack (Howard & Hoffman, 2012). While the Japanese used their own airplanes and bombs, 9/11 terrorists used American airplanes--this shows that the war is already on our soil and they are ready to use our own weapons against us (Howard & Hoffman, 2012). Howard and Hoffman (2012) put this culture of fear in the proper perspective, noting that this is a new type of terrorism that is particularly more violent and is not as concerned with getting converts like the old times; simply put, “religious terrorists...want casualties--lots of them.”

Perhaps another aspect of public fear is the realization that these organizations are not willing to negotiate. In wars past, leaders could meet and discuss options for surrender, negotiations, or other terms; this is not the case with terrorists. They do not want to negotiate and with the vast majority not being sponsored by any recognized state, this complicates the process of controlling and discussing terms with terrorists period. The famous phrase “The United States
does not negotiate with terrorists” comes to reality here as it is not really a matter of not negotiating as much as it is we can’t negotiate with them.

One of the most devastating effects on the American people is most likely the amount of research we have available on terrorists and terrorist organizations. While this database continues to grow as we tediously study terrorist organizations, we still need to understand why there is so much fear created and just how that fear spreads so quickly from just one terrorist attack.

With the understanding of this fear and the amount of available research to establish these ideas, we need to understand the subsequent result on the everyday person as well as the police, and we need to take a look at violence motivated by religion inside of (or against) the United States. The majority of these attacks are perpetrated by two distinct groups: Muslims and Christians. After a thorough assessment of each religion, we need to take a brief look at how the media has handled terrorist attacks as well as subsequent effects from their coverage. Finally, we need to see how policing has evolved and how it may continue to change and adapt to new terrorist threats in the United States. The overall goal is to understand how the public is affected by the attack, the media coverage, and police response, and furthermore to gain insight as to how to empower the public to assist law enforcement agencies in fighting this unique threat.

Islamic Threats

Islamic violence has been at the height of terrorist attacks since the September 11 attacks, even though the first Islamic attacks began long before this monumental event. 9/11 continues to be a monumental attack that has shaped the very fabric of this nation in attitude toward Muslims, the Middle-East, and Jihadist terrorism in general. The 9/11 attacks not only proved to the American people that such a devastating attack was possible, it also sent a message that these Jihadists are willing to give everything to their cause. Perhaps this is why there has been such an impact
created by one single event (as well as the fact that it was 3,000+ civilians that were killed).
There were attacks against the United States prior to the 9/11 attacks, but none that created the impact of this one single attack.

Rewinding from 9/11, the first successful attack on US soil perpetrated by an Islamic terrorist was the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993. It was planned and carried out by Ramzi Yousef who was also a member of Al-Qaeda and should have been much more devastating than it turned out. He was later quoted by the New York Times as saying that this was in response to the U.S. support of Israel, calling the nation of Israel “the state of terrorism” (Resnick, 2013).

Prior to this attack, there were several attacks aimed at the United States that never took place on American soil. Many of these were in response to the occupying of American troops in Saudi Arabia (Watson, 2002). Each decade prior to 9/11 saw Jihadist violence escalate to new levels, implementing hostage taking, airline hijacking, and finally the bombing of a military headquarters in 1996, two US embassies in 2000, and the attack on the U.S.S. Cole that left 17 dead (Delaware Criminal Justice Council, 2012). It seemed as if violence toward the United States continued to rise up to the 9/11 attacks, and much of it was attributed to either the United States support of Israel becoming a nation or the United States assistance in the Gulf War (Watson, 2002).

The very next attack involving Islamic terrorists was the now infamous September 11th attack. After more than a decade of studying this attack, we have changed the very fabric of our law enforcement, government, and intelligence roles. Public reaction to Muslims changed almost overnight regarding Muslims living in America. Elver (2012, p. 138) notes that “America was ready to group Muslims, Arabs, and Middle Easterners together as being responsible for 9/11 as
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a whole.” Law enforcement immediately began to target Muslims in the name of national security (Elver, 2012). The most common, and regarded as the most controversial, reaction to the 9/11 attacks is the implementation of the USA PATRIOT ACT.

It seemed as if the 9/11 attacks opened the floodgates, so to speak, on more Islamic violence on the homeland. A short while after the attacks, Richard Reid, a British-Muslim, tried to bring down a US flight using a crude shoe-bomb (Resnick, 2013). Fortunately the people took a stand and were able to subdue and prevent this attack. Then, in 2002 John Allen Muhammad and Lee Boyd Malvo, Islamic terrorists, used a sniper rifle to kill ten in the Washington, D.C. area (Resnick, 2013).

The next attacks came in 2006 in North Carolina by an Islamic terrorist running people over with his SUV. In this specific attack we once again get more clarity in the reasoning as he yelled he was avenging the deaths of Muslims in the world (Resnick, 2013). While he killed none, this act of lone wolf terrorism was able to get the message out to the rest of the world to give sympathy toward Muslims.

Three years later in New York City, the police uncovered a plot to bomb the subway system in the same manner that the London subways were bombed (Resnick, 2013). This was a chilling plot to uncover as it showed that Islamic Jihadists were now trying to attack New York’s heavily used public transit system. Once again, the Jihadists proved they are willing to attack and kill as many targets as possible, whether they are civilian or not.

What is even more chilling was the Islamic attack inside of the U.S. Army. The Fort Hood shooting remains one of the most gruesome events in modern history. This was not classified as a terrorist attack, yet it has the DNA of terrorism written all over it. Nidal Hasan was a psychiatrist for the U.S. army when he opened fire on the base, killing 13 and injuring 30 (Res-
nick, 2013). He allegedly had ties to al-Awlaki, a very extreme home-grown terrorist (Resnick, 2013). This makes the Arkansas attack of the same year fall right in line with what seems to be the motive of many Islamic attacks: retribution. An American-Muslim opened fire at a recruiting office killing one military officer and injuring one other, and was quoted saying he was “mad at the U.S. military for what it had done to Muslims in the past” (Resnick, 2013). These two attacks seem to have the general undertone of seeking revenge on the United States for their treatment of Muslims worldwide, yet with a more specific target of the American military.

In 2009, another airline bombing attempt took place, this time with a bomb in the underwear of an Islamic passenger. Umar Farouk Abdulmutullab was a Nigerian who allegedly had ties with Al-Qaeda (Resnick, 2013). Then in 2010, Faisal Shahzad attempted to ignite an improvised car bomb in Times Square (Resnick, 2013). While the plot failed, it continued to bring a culture of fear to New York City.

Finally, 2013 saw the most recent (and violent) attacks on US soil by lone wolf Jihadists: the Boston Bombings. Dzhokar Tsarnaev and Tamerlan Tsarnaev detonated bombs at the finish line of the Boston Marathon, killing 3 and injuring more than 250 (CBS, 2013). In the interrogation of Dzhokar he mentioned that the attacks were in response to the American invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan (CBS, 2013). This attack rounds off a common theme for Jihadists attacking the United States: American military presence in the Middle-East.

The Council on Foreign Relations recently noted that, over the past decade, the number of terrorism cases involving U.S. Muslims has been increasing (Myre, 2013). The problem, however, is that sometimes there are no warning signs with the homegrown type. It is easy to see that terrorists from the Middle East have a collective hatred for the United States, however, identifying these threats and attitudes in the homeland is a much harder task. The Tsarnaev brothers are a
good example of this as they did not exhibit any signs of violent behavior prior to the attacks; it is cases like this that the authorities have the most concern with as it is usually too late when the threat is realized (Myre, 2013). If this is the new trend in terrorism, and it is probably highly preferred for foreign terrorists to recruit these types of people, then we must consider the old idea of “sleeper cells” as well as lone wolf terrorists. How do we know who is a terrorist? How do we know when and where they will strike next? These are valid questions, but answers are not readily available as counter-terrorism operations continue to evolve. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (2013) recently published some findings that they believe are helping to radicalize U.S. Muslims. The studies show that many Muslims believe that the war in the Middle East was a direct war on Muslims, inasmuch the recruiters hope this appeals to the sympathetic side of Muslims and hope to sway them to the Jihadist cause (Myre, 2013). Secondly, internet and social media have expanded the ways that extremists can influence and recruit, thus making it extremely difficult to stop internet propaganda and videos (Myre, 2013). Finally, many of the new extremists have never committed any crimes, therefore resulting in no criminal history to comb through (Myre, 2013). All of these factors are creating violent extremists who look normal, act normal, and are basically a ticking time bomb without a visible clock. This also makes it very difficult for U.S. law enforcement agencies to effectively detect and deter terrorism inside the United States. The Tsarnaev brothers claimed to be self-radicalized and self-taught in the ways of bomb making; however, as we will see later, Jihadist propaganda has made this process of self-radicalization extremely easy.

The U.S. government has had much success in stopping extremists from becoming violent. In the early 2000’s the FBI conducted a sting on Mohamed Osman Mohamud, an extremist who was planning on detonating a bomb at a Christmas tree lighting ceremony. Two fellow
friends of Mohamud’s testified that Mohamud desperately wanted to travel to Afghanistan to fight alongside Muslims against the United States (Investigative Project on Terrorism (IPT), 2012).

Another successful sting involved the Springfield, IL Joint Terrorism Task Force alongside the FBI in the apprehending of Michael Finton. Finton was an Illinois native, a middle-aged white man, and a radical convert to Islam (IPT, 2011). Finton wanted to detonate a 1,000 pound truck bomb outside the Federal Courthouse, but also wanted to kill people as they evacuated and possibly cause damage to the congressional offices near the courthouse (IPT, 2011).

In June of 2013, Khalid Ouazzani was indicted for funding terrorist organizations with the profits of his successful auto parts business in Kansas City. There were also supposed ties with two other American extremists to bomb the New York stock exchange, however, these reports remain under investigation. It was noted during his trial that he had always wanted to join and help Al Qaeda (Morris, 2013).

One final notable incident was the “suicide” of Joel Hinrichs III outside of the OU/KState football game on the main campus at the University of Oklahoma. While the actual details of this case remain a mystery, the fact remains that he was sitting only a short distance away with bombs on his person. This and the other successful stings serve as a reality check that home-grown terrorists are growing and are extreme. It also proves that not all Islamic extremists look “middle eastern”.

Now that we have assessed a quick run-down of recent attacks, we can dive deeper into the public’s thinking of Islamic extremists. We can already see that an instant bias may exist based not only on the number of attacks but also on the significant death toll associated with Islamic Jihadists. According to a study released by the Migration Information Source (2009), in
2009 there were about 830,000 immigrants from Middle Eastern countries residing in the United States. This number is especially important when studying the public’s perception of religious extremists, especially if less than half of that population were traditional Muslims (ones that wear the traditional Islamic garb). Therefore, the rest of the numbers presented will have high significance when we realize the actual amount of Middle Eastern looking people that currently reside inside of the United States.

A recent study conducted by the Pew Research Center (2013) noted some interesting results concerning the relationship between the American public and their thoughts regarding Islam. As of May, 2013, 42% of Americans view the Islamic religion as one that encourages violence among its believers while 46% say it is not (Pew Research Center, 2013). These numbers show that the country is basically split in half as to if Islam encourages violence or not. The more interesting part is that since 2002, these numbers have stayed relatively the same (Pew Research Center, 2013). More interesting, however, is the finding that Republicans were much higher in their belief that Islam incited violence--62% of them, compared to 29% of Democrats (Pew Research Center, 2013). When these numbers are compared to the type of media one may watch on Fox News or other types of mainstream right-wing media, it is almost entirely possible to see how the media might shape a view based on the beliefs of those in the party. Finally, the research found that 60% of people ages 18-49 did not view Islam as a religion that incites violence within its members, compared to 51% of the 50+ age group that did (Pew Research Center, 2013).

Separately, George Barna conducted a survey along the same lines as the Pew Research Center. This survey found that Americans are split on their perception of Islam, from very unfavorable to very favorable (Barna, 2013). This study also agreed with the Pew Research Center’s study in regards to the Republican view of Islam, which was the highest number for very unfa-
favorable (Barna, 2013). The survey identified 61% of evangelical Christians as having an unfavorable view of Islam while only 7% of people who did not identify with a religion had an unfavorable view of Islam (Barna, 2013). Then the survey shifts to Islam and violence. They found that 53% of people believe that Islam is a religion of peace and 26% said that Islam is a religion of violence; evangelical Christians were held at 52% saying that Islam was a religion of violence and 62% of people with no faith say the opposite, that it is a religion of peace (Barna, 2013). The final and most interesting part of this study focused on how extremists have shaped the view of Islam. Barna (2013) found that 68% of Americans think that extremists have distorted the view of Islam through violent attacks. Surveys like this are extremely helpful in understanding the link between Americans and their thoughts regarding Islam in general. Based upon these numbers alone we can see that there is a very large divide in this country as to the perception of Islamic people (not extremists or Jihadists, just regular Islamic people!). If these surveys are supposed to represent the American people at large, then with a population of around 132 million people, we would see that at least 66 million people believe that the Islamic religion is violent (US Census Bureau, 2012).

A separate study published by the Pew Research Center (2011) showed that nearly 50% of American Muslims do not believe that their leaders have done enough to speak out about the extremism problem, and even further only 6% believe there is a great deal of support for extremism in Islam in the United States compared to 15% of the general public. Findings like these are very interesting as we continue to research and discover what the public truly thinks about religions and violence. These specific findings show that the general public thinks much differently than the average Muslim-American. These numbers show that regular Muslim-Americans are willing to work with law enforcement officials to help fight Jihadist terrorism targeting the Unit-
ed States, a significant difference when compared to the number of people that believe Islam incites violence among its members.

We can see fully that the American public does not have a very favorable view of Muslims in general. Many studies have proven that Muslims think it is harder to live in the United States after 9/11 (Pew Research Center, 2011; Elver, 2012). This is directly due to the harsh feelings American’s display toward Muslims and could possibly be linked to the amount of media attention that radical Islamic extremists have received. Even further, some traditional Muslims were openly abused and encountered various kinds of discrimination, especially among Islamic women who chose to wear the traditional headscarves (Elver, 2012). It was even discovered that after the 9/11 attacks, 60% of Americans believed it was acceptable to profile Arabs and Muslims (Elver, 2012). The American view of Muslims and Islam has been forever scarred by recent terrorist attacks, and with the continuous unrest in the Middle East, that stigma could continue on into the future.

We can look to the past for help in understanding the anger directed toward Islamic people in the United States. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed an executive order that would incarcerate some 122,000 Japanese-Americans to relocation camps (University of California, 2013). The general attitude toward Japanese people changed significantly after Pearl Harbor to the point of actually denying the rights of Japanese people and holding them in camps for no more reason than the fact that they were Japanese (University of California, 2013). Why is this significant to the general attitude toward Muslims in the United States? As we have seen from the numbers and information provided, a general bias exists against practicing Muslims in the United States due to a fear of what could happen. However, the issue for law enforcement officials is that they can no longer “profile” based upon appearance, but must
learn from the past and begin to look at activity instead. American law enforcement faces a unique threat (that will be discussed in a later section) as to the best way to educate the general public about Jihadists, educate their own officers, and continue to conduct surveillance in a lawful and consistent manner. If Islamic Jihadist violence continues to grow in the United States, law enforcement agencies on all levels will have no choice but to take significant action to further safeguard the people. The question remains, however, as to the best way for law enforcement to accomplish this task.

Christian Violence

Islamic extremists and Islamic violence flood the media, but they are not alone in enjoying extreme acts that lead to violence. Christians also have a long history of extremism and violence. Many violent and particularly deadly attacks have been perpetrated by Christian or Christian-claiming sects of people. Radical Muslims seem bent on using force to clear the world of infidels, Christians on the other hand, have used violence to show their disdain for the morality (or lack of) for the citizens of the United States. The most prevalent images that come to mind are ones of abortion clinic bombings and the Westboro Baptist Church protests. Both of these will be explored in much detail, however, there are other types and reasons for Christian violence in the United States that must also be explored. An interesting aspect to explore further is the radical difference between “extremist” Christians. On one side, extremist Christians use violence and force to demonstrate their beliefs; on the other side extremist Christians are seen as the ones that embrace strong moral values yet are just as zealous as their violent counterparts. The less violent types could be characterized as the hardcore evangelical Christians evangelizing each and every person they come across, but for the purposes of this research will not be explored as they are typically not a threat to public safety.
While abortion clinic bombings and the infamous Fred Phelps dominate current media, Christian religious extremism brings to mind certain past events that will stand forever in American history. The incidents at Waco and Ruby Ridge are probably the two most famous examples of religious extremism in the United States, and both of these have influenced other terrorist attacks inside of the United States. Christian terrorists inside of the United States is an extremely broad umbrella, with many groups falling under this category. Some of these have included groups such as the KKK, the Army of God, and The Covenant, The Sword, and The Arm of the Lord. There is much public reaction to many of these groups of Christian extremists, and we will examine the groups and subsequent public view.

Barrick led study in 2008 that surveyed the “unchurched” in the United States in order to discover their ideas about Christians and Christianity in general. The study found that 72% of people surveyed said the Christian church is full of hypocrites (Barrick, 2008). Another 44% said that Christians get on their nerves (Barrick, 2008). This alone should give a great baseline to begin our look at what the public opinion is of Christianity and how events have shaped this view.

A survey of about one thousand Americans conducted by the Barna group asked different open-ended questions about Christians. They found that about one in five Americans said that Christians have had a negative impact on society by carrying out violence and hatred in the name of Jesus (Shepson, 2010). In a separate study, the Barna group (2007) found that Americans thought that Christians were judgmental, hypocritical, old-fashioned, too involved with politics, and anti-homosexual. There is one label that the Christians did not receive in this research, and was the label of “extremist” or “violent”. Finally, Barna, in an older survey tried to understand how Americans felt about Christians keeping the Christian symbols and other references in
schools and public buildings, as well as making Christianity the official religion of America. In this study, he commented that the fervor of Evangelicals has earned them the title of “extremist” when discussing anything about faith or morality (Barna, 2004).

Now that we have an understanding of how the American public views Christianity, we need to take a deeper look into some of the widely known Christian extremist organizations. Looking at these organizations can help us to understand why there is such disdain about Christians in the United States. Many of these organizations fit the definition of terrorist very well, yet they have not been labeled terrorists in the past, but most certainly could be today.

The Ku Klux Klan is the oldest known organization in the United States to terrorize one group of people (Akins, 2006). What is lesser publicized is their belief in Christianity, making them a Christian-extremist organization (Akins, 2006). The Klan has targeted other groups besides the African-American community, including Jews, Catholics, homosexuals, and even drug dealers (Akins, 2006). Essentially, they believe that they are the chosen race of God and that they have certain God-given rights to protect and enforce (Akins, 2006). They identify with Christianity and believe that they are the only chosen race of God, while all others are false (Akins, 2006). They also hold the belief that these “false” people are on the same level as animals, thus justifying their violent actions toward them (Akins, 2006). They are firm believers in an apocalyptic view of the end-times (which seems to be a major belief among many of the Christian extremists), and is noted that the Ku Klux Klan is the most notorious and well-organized domestic terrorism group operating within the United States, and has committed acts of all kinds, including terrorism, murder, and other forms of violence (Akins, 2006).

The actions of Klan members are firmly rooted and adhere almost spot-on with the definition of terrorism. They have raped, murdered, set fire, bombed, tortured, assaulted, and com-
mitted many other violent crimes in hopes to instill fear into minorities across the United States (Akins, 2006). One specific example of a plotted (but foiled) terrorist attempt was to blow up a natural gas plant in northern Texas, which would be a diversion for them to steal an armored truck and further finance more attacks (Akins, 2006). The most disturbing part of this plotted attack was that they admitted to keeping the plan in action even though there were many children nearby that would have been victims in the explosion (Akins, 2006). Such acts resonate very clear in lieu of some of the more recent attacks by Islamic extremists.

The KKK routinely holds rallies for the purpose of pumping up their members and building their courage, yet these rallies are also hot-beds for weapons and other dangerous materials, thus the police are sometimes involved (Akins, 2006). It is after these rallies that many of the terrorist acts and/or crimes take place. They have driven to black night clubs and shot at them, shot at synagogues, incited beatings on homosexual people, and engaged into violent altercations with the police (Akins, 2006). These altercations with the police are usually a result of police interference with the Klan’s activities.

While the KKK remains the most notorious of the United States Christian extremist groups, there still exist others that are more pronounced about their actions and will readily identify and justify their actions right alongside their belief in Jesus. Some of these other groups have committed larger acts of domestic terrorism, with most of them being aimed at specific groups of people.

The Covenant, Sword, and Arm of the Lord was a Christian extremist group that committed several acts of violence in the 1980’s. They believed that the United States would soon experience a race war, and that they needed to be prepared both spiritually and physically (National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), 2010). What en-
sued was a compound at the border of Missouri and Arkansas that served as their training camp. Their leader, James Ellison, routinely preached that whites were God’s chosen race and that they needed to cleanse the United States of the other “demonic” races (START, 2010). Ellison held training campus at his compound and taught basic survival skills, weapons skills, and what he dubbed “Christian martial arts” (START, 2010). Meanwhile, in Ellison’s church services, he began to preach committing crime and violence, basing his justification on Old Testament examples (START, 2010). It wasn’t until 1983 that the Covenant, Sword, and Arm of the Lord began their intense attacks. They bombed a church in Indiana, set fire to a church in Missouri, and then attempted to explode a gas pipeline in Chicago (START, 2010). Finally, in 1985, federal authorities surrounded their camp and demanded their surrender; after four days the CSA surrendered, leading the agents to find multiple weapons, artillery shells, land-mines, and other explosives in the compound (START, 2010). Their big attack, however, was foiled in this raid. The CSA had planned to use their large stockpile of cyanide to poison a water supply of an unnamed city in the United States (START, 2010).

The previous two examples show a consistency in white supremacy intermixed with Christian religious beliefs. It is fair to say that the KKK has inspired many other white supremacist organization that have committed acts of terror along the same lines. Some of these include the ever popular Aryan Nations and The Order. These organizations all have one common trait: They are all mostly comprised of white Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) members who are mostly in the middle-to-lower class and seek either a racial cleansing or a racial war (START, 2010). From here we turn to a different trend among Christian extremists: abortion clinics.

Abortion clinics have long been a target for Christian extremist organizations in the United States. These acts of terror have been perpetrated by various groups and sometimes lone wolf...
violence. A quick search of recent media stories can reveal much violence against clinics, including bombings, arsons, anthrax attacks, and murders. The Army of God is a group much like the KKK and the CSA, yet they have a violent hatred for abortion clinics and call for the destruction of clinics and the murder of their doctors (START, 2010). The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (2010) details a manual that Army of God members frequently use that is essentially a guide for abortion clinic violence. Inside of this manual, one can discover how to blockade, bomb, and set fire to abortion clinics, as well as how to torture and kill those who work in the clinics (START, 2010). Their members have been highly publicized in many terrorist actions, with the most famous being the bombing of Atlanta Olympic Park. Eric Robert Rudolph not only bombed the Olympic Park, but he also bombed an abortion clinic and a gay bar in the Atlanta area as well (START, 2010). He had planted secondary bombs in order to kill the emergency personnel that responded (START, 2010).

James Kopp was convicted for the killing of an abortion clinic doctor and was linked to multiple other shootings against abortion clinic doctors, including the murder of Dr. Slepian in his Buffalo, New York home by a high powered rifle (START, 2010). Meanwhile, other members have been involved in sending hundreds of letters laced with anthrax to abortion clinics all over the United States (START, 2010).

From here we can literally open the flood-gates on violence against abortion clinics by lone-wolf individuals. Dr. Tiller is the most recent (and most widely popular) abortion doctor assassination. According to a story by the New York Times (2009), Dr. Tiller was a late-term abortionist who had experienced his clinic being bombed, being shot in both arms, and finally, being assassinated point blank during a church service in Kansas. Interestingly enough, with all of the violence directed at abortion clinics, there have only been four abortion doctors killed in
the United States (Davey & Stumpey, 2009). Such attacks have all the same elements that Islamic attacks over the past decade have had: recruiting, planning, major violence, and specific targets based upon a certain criteria. These were not gang murders nor were they random acts of violence; these were attacks aimed to instill fear and carry out retribution.

The previous examples have all had one thing in common: they are extremist groups that readily incite or commit acts of violence in the name of their beliefs. There are other Christian extremist organizations that did not commit acts of violence until they were provoked. We will explore the two most famous cases that helped shape the view of Americans toward Christian extremists, as well as influencing other acts of terror, including the Oklahoma City bombing.

The incidents in Waco, Texas will be etched into the history of the United States. Revered for its controversy, this was one perfect example of a Christian extremist organization that was not violent, until the United States government provoked it, that is.

David Koresh was the leader of a group of Branch Davidians that held the belief that the end-times battle was drawing near. David claimed that he was received special revelation from God that this battle would soon ensue and that they needed to prepare themselves for the cleansing of the United States (Tabor, 1995). Koresh’s group holed themselves up in a large compound in rural Texas, stockpiling weapons to prepare for the end-times battle. The ATF, meanwhile, acted on tips about illegal weapons activities that lead to the first raid on the compound. At this point, details began to emerge about the activities at Koresh’s compound, including his supposed prophecy from God that he was to be the only person inside the compound that was allowed to be sexually active, while the rest of the males practiced celibacy, thus giving Koresh access to their wives and young girls (Tabor, 1995). The ATF viewed these as hostages, and many of them were freed during a later raid by the FBI. The initial raid by the ATF proved disastrous, with a
cease-fire eventually called when agents began to run out of ammunition (Tabor, 1995). After the FBI became involved, a fifty-one day standoff ensued between federal agents and the remaining members inside of the compound. One author notes that Koresh would speak to the FBI only with Biblical rhetoric, told the media that they were currently in the fifth seal (a reference to the Biblical book of Revelation), and fully believed that the agents were “Babylon” and that he was the holy city of Revelation (Tabor, 1995). This set up the perfect storm for the FBI and the situation at Waco: As long as these zealots believed that they were in the final battle of armageddon and that God was on their side, there would be no surrendering. This is an excellent example of the extremist rhetoric as it begins to alter their very thoughts and actions, pushing them into a terrifying battle if necessary. In the end, amid much controversy, the FBI shot holes in the walls of the compound and pumped tear gas into it; eventually the compound caught fire and David Koresh was killed, presumably by his right-hand man who also was reported to have committed suicide immediately after he shot Koresh (Tabor, 1995).

The incident at Ruby Ridge is one other incident where the extremists were not violent until provoked. What makes this incident applicable to this study is the fact that they were living out their religion in an extremely dramatic way, hence the title “extremist”. It is very important to note that the Weaver’s did not turn violent until they were provoked; there is little doubt that if they were never bothered to begin with, the family may yet still be living in the forest awaiting the apocalyptic return of Jesus.

Randy Weaver had moved his family out into the woods after a supposed revelation from God to his wife about the corruption of the world and the coming cleansing (Linder, 2010). The Weaver’s had read a particularly interesting piece of Christian apocalyptic literature called “The Late, Great Planet Earth” (Linder, 2010). Written by Hal Lindsey in the 1970’s, this book influ-
enced their thoughts of an end times nuclear battle, evil government, Jesus returning and the Christian rapture about to take place (Linder, 2010). Their beliefs began to isolate them and eventually caused their move into the mountains of Idaho, as well as Randy becoming involved with the Aryan Nation movement (Linder, 2010).

The U.S. Marshals, after a long investigation of Randy for supposed weapons violations, made their move in the woods for surveillance on the Weaver’s cabin. The family dog was alerted to the Marshals and began to bark erratically, which sparked one Marshal to kill the dog, and then Sammy Weaver, the 15 year old son, shooting at the marshal (Lynch, 2002). Sammy and one of the marshals were both killed, while the rest of the family retreated inside of their cabin (Lynch, 2002). What happened next was unthinkable: During a stand-off, an FBI sniper shot and wounded Randy, and shot and killed his wife (who was holding their baby)—both of them not posing any current threat to the FBI or any other person (Lynch, 2002). There were no orders to surrender, no announcement, only the shots fired by the sniper (Lynch, 2002). While the Waco case was an example of a religious sect aggressively defending their home, this was on an entirely different scale. Unfortunately, much like the Waco incident, this was played out exactly as the Weaver’s had been led to believe. They believed the world was corrupted, and the agents coming to their door would have no doubt sparked their religious alarms that they were right. Randy Weaver did win a case against the United States government and was acquitted of the charges brought against him, however, he lost his wife and one of his children amidst the confusion. It is important to note that Randy never actually associated his family with the Aryan Nation, he continually argued that he and his family simply wanted to escape religious persecution and live peacefully in the mountains (Linder, 2010).
While there still remains many conspiracy theories about Waco and Ruby Ridge, there also remains the undertone that police officers need to have a better understanding of religious extremists. For instance, what if FBI agents would have negotiated with Koresh and stood down from their attack? Would things have turned out different? Understanding why a group of religious people are doing something that others deem out of line could be a useful link in successfully deterring future acts of violence such as these two events. With the growing popularity of “doomsday prepping”, we could have many more potentially dangerous encounters with religious zealots who think this is the end times and the police are some sort of representative of the Anti-Christ or other Biblical end times figure.

It is also worth noting the inspiration that extremists can create. While Timothy McVeigh was a political extremist bent upon toppling the United States government, he was highly influenced by the events of Waco (FBI.gov). McVeigh remains the most notorious domestic terrorist in United States history along with the worst act of domestic terrorism the country has ever witnessed. This was all due to the events of a group of religious extremists and subsequent law enforcement response. This single chain of events, more than any information available today, should serve to warn law enforcement and researchers alike of the devastating effects of violent religious extremism. These events should also serve as red flags to gain an understanding of how religion can influence groups of people into committing acts of violence. Studying what the public believes regarding a certain religion could help to uncover various biases that could exist regarding events or religions in general.

There are other types of Christian extremists besides the violent figures mostly associated with religious extremism. Fred Phelps is a spearhead for extremism Christianity and is one of the notorious and outspoken Christian extremists in the United States today. He is the leader of the
outspoken Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kansas. He has been on national television many times stating his disdain for the homosexual community, as well as the web address of his church’s website being “www.godhatesfags.com”. Phelps’ church has picketed other churches for their stance on homosexuality, applauded the deaths of homosexuals, and has said that the 9/11 attacks are judgement from God against the United States (Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), 2006). Phelps has gone as far as to picket the funerals of those killed in the war on terrorism in the middle-east, celebrating their deaths as judgement from God (SPLC, 2006).

The group has gone as far as to make a film available on DVD to promote their religious beliefs about homosexuals, Jews, and even current President Barrack Obama being the anti-christ (ADL, 2013). They openly publish hate speech toward Jews, homosexuals, African-Americans, and even Christians, which is the religion they identify with (ADL, 2013). WBC and Phelps have also spoken very outwardly against the United States, applauding the deaths from 9/11, the war in the middle-east, and calling the United States a country ran by “sodomites” (a reference to a city of wicked individuals from the Old Testament) (ADL, 2013).

What Fred Phelps has accomplished is a very publicized Christianity that is hate-filled and actually pushes the bounds of extremism. While many preachers and churches across the United States are preaching love and peace, Phelps and his extremist movement are preaching hate and death. This has a profound effect on the American perception of the Christian religion as a whole, especially since many of the actions by Phelps and his church are highly publicized and receive national attention. While he remains non-violent in his form of extreme Christianity, he is taking the Christian religion to the extreme by the messages he portrays. In fact, it is not hard to see many links between his propaganda and the propaganda of many Islamic extremists
who are calling for the judgement of the United States. Simply put, it will only take one count of violence for law enforcement to label Phelps as a Christian terrorist.

To sum up the Christian perspective, it is obvious that there is much more bloodshed and violence in the name of Christianity in the history of the United States. With so many violent militias that have ties and claims to Christianity operating inside of the United States, it is no wonder the public has begun to lose interest and faith in the Christian religion. Much like Islam, how can a religion, despite the insurmountable amount of evidence available for proving the claims that this religion is the one true religion, have such hatred and violence when they are supposed to preach love? In recent years, however, it seems as if Christian extremism has taken a back seat to Islamic extremism, even though we have already seen that Islam commits a very small margin of violence in the United States. Furthermore, it remains to be seen how law enforcement in the United States continues to watch and counter the growing religious movements toward homosexuals and abortion clinics, as well as any increase of end time zealots.

Though Christians and Muslims have a long and violent history (The Crusades), there are a few groups that are dedicated to coming together to promote peace. Christians and Muslims for Peace (CAMP) is one such example. This organization combines Christians and Muslims for the ultimate goal of first proving that the two religions can work and grow together; and second to promote peace between the two religions (CAMP, 2014). While this organization may be very controversial, it has effectively established chapters in the United States, Philippines, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East (CAMP, 2014). There is no true evidence of the effectiveness of this organization, however, it shows that the two mega-religions can come together and work together.
Media Influence

In our modern world there is no limit to the availability of information and breaking news. There is virtually no news that goes unreported in this age—and almost instantaneously at that. How does this play into the hands of a terrorist? Does this have any effect on the level of fear of people? Does this shape their view of crime and terrorism in general?

First, it is important to understand that the media does influence the public. Dowler (2003) in a study measuring fear with the watching of television crime shows found that there is a connection between the two. However, Dowler (2003) also notes that merely watching television news or reading newspapers as their primary source for crime related news does not produce a significant number. This is a very good finding, until further in the research it is discovered that television shows are “largely sensational, violent, and fear producing” and that “viewers may receive a distorted image...which may produce fear or anxiety” (Dowler, 2003).

Martin (2010), on the other hand, notes in his own research regarding terrorism and the media, that if you couple a graphic attack with the media’s need for added drama, it will create a serious culture of fear. Terrorists understand an all too important fact: information is power, and information can be used in devastating ways (Martin, 2010). If terrorists understand that there is a culture of fear that surrounds fanatical crime shows and movies, then why not create one of their own? With one simple act, a terrorist or group of terrorists can gain international attention instantly.

As we can see, while there is a definite need for the public to stay informed on the latest news, there is also a serious concern that exists with terrorists who want to spread their propa-
ganda through media influence. In fact, it has been noted that Al-Zawahiri has stated that “...more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media” (Transnational Terrorism, Security, and the Rule of Law (TTSR), 2008). A European study identified four goals of terrorists in their use of the media: 1) Gain attention and create fear; 2) Recognition of motives; 3) Gain respect and/or sympathy; and 4) Gain status for more media treatment (TTSR, 2008). If millions of people are watching television each day, that leaves the potential that a large portion of those people could either become fearful or become sympathetic to the terrorist’s cause--this is a win-win situation for terrorist organizations. Terrorists are hoping that either American news channels are going to show their attacks over and over again, or that their attacks are going to enjoy immortality through the production of movies and television shows (Nacos, 2002). By continuing to relive, re-enact, or simply re-air (maybe as an anniversary special) attacks conducted by terrorists, the fear and heartache can live forever.

Knowing that terrorists like to publicize their cause so as to gain attention quickly creates an immediate re-evaluation of some of the popular stories the media picks up on. For example, the highly publicized protests from the Westboro Baptist Church are great examples of extremist publicizing. In 2011 one of Phelp’s sons conducted an interview with HLN that not only got his side of the story out in the public light (even though it is a negative view of his father), it gave Phelps an opportunity to respond in such a manner so as to keep his message clear (CNN, 2011). Islamic terrorists do the same thing only in a more violent manner. By choosing large events or large venues, terrorists can effectively cause much destruction and turn national attention to their cause; thus creating a culture of fear while spreading their message. A simple search on CNN’s website of the words “Boston Marathon” produced five pages of results, with many pertaining to
the attack, with the latest news story being updated on November 7, 2013. This goes back to show the effect of granting a fearful event immortality.

Propaganda is another extremely important tool for terrorists to use. Coupled with breaking television news; internet print has become a dangerous tandem for spreading the terrorist message (Martin, 2010). A popular tool in recent years has been INSPIRE magazine, an internet based publication. Issues of INSPIRE magazine have included such images as Islamic extremists burning an American flag as well as articles on building their own bombs or why it is essential to become a martyr. Issues of INSPIRE magazine are easily found along with many of the images with a routine Google search. There are also several websites that currently display the Al-Qaeda propaganda that can be found using this same method. A Frontline investigation recently aired revealed that the Tsarnaev brothers learned their pressure cooker bombs from an issue of INSPIRE magazine (Khan, 2013). This magazine appeared in 2010 and is published by Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (Khan, 2013). Other articles have included how to cause traffic accidents by spreading oil on the roads and other bomb-making instructions (Khan, 2013). The true issue is the fact that when the online magazine first appeared, media outlets were outraged with it, thus giving it well publicized media attention and essentially becoming responsible for some of the spread of this publication (Khan, 2013). One final note regarding the magazine is that we may see the influence and hype pick back up, because there has never been an attack with direct credit to an issue of INSPIRE magazine (Khan, 2013).

INSPIRE should cause a bit of a stir in older criminal justice professionals. Looking back in history, even though newspapers have lost their popularity, we can still point to one dramatic incident using print media: The “Unibomber”, which is an excellent example of an extremist using print media to publicize a message and create a culture of fear. In 1995, Ted Kaczynski de-
manded two of the nation’s leading newspapers to publish his manifesto with the threat that he would not stop until they did (Martin, 2010). If newspapers are quickly going out and massive amounts of internet based publications are becoming more modern, we can stand to learn much from what Kaczynski was able to create using media as an avenue for fear.

Other examples of internet print groups who aren’t necessarily religious in behavior also bear significance as their tactics could be reproduced. Groups like PETA and ALF use the same tactics for their message that terrorists have picked up on in recent years. PETA has been classified as a domestic terrorist threat by the US Department of Agriculture for their actions against property, as well as their use of media stunts and celebrities to help gain support to their cause (Potter, 2009). The use of sympathetic messages and websites to capture the hearts of some is an extremely effective message that these animal groups and some Christian groups have made excellent use of. While some of the animal rights groups are legitimately ran organizations, they have also been known to support other websites that condone violence in support of their cause, showing that violent actions can result from seemingly harmless information (Potter, 2009).

Islamic extremists have also used this same tactic to support resistance of the ongoing wars in the Middle East to groups working within the United States (Martin, 2010). These actions show the threat of using media effectively to support a cause, even if it includes violence.

More recent is the use of media in the Kansas City, Missouri confusion. This incident was grabbed by the media almost as quickly as it erupted. Nearly all media in Kansas City reported a known terrorist watch list individual walking into a federal building and turning himself in while also mentioning a bomb in his car. What ensued was a complete lock-down of the downtown area coupled with increased police presence and a bomb-squad operation (Smith & Barr, 2012). In reality, there was no terrorist threat and the media actually had jumped on specif-
ic key words that were overheard; this misinformation led to national attention when in reality this was an isolated and controlled situation (Smith & Barr, 2012). The Kansas City Star immediately ran a background on the suspected individual to discover that he was involved in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and had been stopped in Grain Valley where he discovered he was on the terrorist watch list (Smith & Barr, 2012). What the Star failed to report is that this man was an informant who helped convict those responsible for the 1993 bombings. (Smith & Barr, 2012).

After an extensive lock-down of the downtown area and a bomb squad robotic search of his car, the FBI released a statement that told citizens there was never a threat of a bomb nor was anyone ever in any real danger (Smith & Barr, 2012). Even though the FBI released this statement, the effects were irreversible: fear was created and whether the man actually wanted it or not, terrorists gained a win because an entire city was shut down for hours in fear of an Islamic terrorist. This event should show law enforcement and researchers alike how influential (and dangerous) the media can be. According to the statement by the FBI, there was never a threat of any kind, yet news outlets seemed to imply that there were bombs and threats, and that many people were in serious danger.

The Boston bombings are also a great example of media over-attention. The Christian Broadcast Network (2013) ran a story that the Tsarnaev brothers were headed toward Times Square to detonate the rest of their explosives. While this seems like a harmless story, it actually works for the terrorists in that a culture of fear would be created around Times Square for a time. In a hypothetical sense, if Times Square were to be put into a state of fear because of this information, the result to the New York economy could be disastrous from a lesser amount of people spending money at this locale. The Boston bombings are also a great example of terrorist’s seek-
ing more attention to create more fear by utilizing the media. In essence, *any* terrorist attack in current times will accomplish two goals: to cause destruction and death; and to cause fear via the media. There is simply no major attack that will not go under the radar and not get national, if not international, media attention.

While the media has a job to do, extreme caution and more discretion should be used before a story is covered. Media outlets need to understand that, in their quest for full coverage of a current story, they may be spreading widespread fear or misinformation about an event. For all of the expert analysis and opinions, media outlets exhibit much ignorance in terrorist operations, especially their use of the media, as we have already covered. Attention is what terrorists thrive on, especially media attention as it gives them a wider scope to create a culture of fear. The Transnational Terrorism, Security, and the Rule of Law (2008) went as far as to say that the media indirectly and sometimes unwillingly assist terrorists. The media is looking for an excellent story that will keep viewers glued to their televisions and it just so happens that significant terrorist attacks (such as 9/11 and Boston) have that movie-like potential. These attacks had the necessary elements to create an atmosphere of disbelief, drama, death, heroes, villains--things that we usually only see in an action movie (TTSR, 2008).

A recent study conducted by Penn State University found that the average American’s view of terrorism in fact is influenced by the media (scienceblog, 2003). Furthermore, at least 87% stated that the terrorism problem in America was important (responses ranged from very to extremely in this percentage) (scienceblog, 2003). While this study outright proved that the media has a large scale influence over the thoughts of the public, it also asked another question which might be the more disturbing find of this research: The public believes that terrorism is a problem yet does not take any action to prepare for it (scienceblog, 2003)! The research found
that there is increasing ambiguity in the media reports and instead of advising citizens on how to
prepare or warning signs, they are instead showing debates and disagreements; thus not inform-
ing the public in any positive way (scienceblog, 2003).

In the present, the public can see more graphic images on sites like youtube or other so-
cial media sites. While these have been censored in times past, they are becoming more and more
widespread thanks to cellular phones and the internet. The future seems wide open when we con-
sider the current technological age as well as the speed in which information seems to spread.

Current Law Enforcement Information

After the 9/11 attacks, the United States government quickly created the Department of
Homeland Security, who is now responsible for the bulk of the education that is made available
about terrorism and other types of threats to the United States. On the Homeland Security web-
site there are many educational topics that the public can access and study. In regards to religious
extremists, the Department of Homeland Security has a topic devoted entirely to countering vio-
lent extremism (DHS.gov). In this, they accurately explain how complex the issue of religious
extremism is. In the introduction it is readily stated that these threats are not just limited to one
single ideology, but that people and groups are inspired by a wide range of religions, political
beliefs, and other ideologies that have promoted violence against the United States (DHS.gov).
What is striking about this is that they open the entire resource by not pointing out a single group
or religion. What is also striking about this particular resource is the warning given about the use
of the media; it reads:

“Increasingly sophisticated use of the internet, mainstream and social media, and information
technology by violent extremists adds an additional layer of complexity. (DHS.gov, para. 2)”
This statement alone outright warns the public yet also helps to explain the growing complexity of the use of the media in terrorism today.

After the introduction, however, the rest of the “Countering Violent Extremism” resource page is devoted to showing how the Department of Homeland Security is partnering with local police departments in training, conferences, workshops, and helping get local law enforcement grants to upgrade their existing programs (DHS.gov). There is no classification of a violent extremist, no warning signs, and no otherwise helpful information in identifying and preventing religious extremist threats. This seems to be merely an informational resource that shows a few ways that Homeland Security is helping local law enforcement identify and counter violent religious extremism.

The Department of Homeland Security has a second resource entitled “If you see something, say something” (DHS.gov). This was originally used by New York’s transportation authority after the 9/11 attacks, but now Homeland Security has taken it nationwide (DHS.gov). The campaign itself is a relatively simple one: if you see something suspicious, report it to the police immediately. However, Homeland Security goes into depth about biased reporting, which is good considering the thoughts harbored about Islam and other Middle Eastern religions. The resource mentions that race, ethnicity, national origin, and religion alone are not suspicious, as well as hitting thoughts, ideas, beliefs, and other types of expressions or associations (DHS.gov). Instead, they are adamant about citizens reporting only suspicious behaviors that may be indicative of terrorism or criminal behavior rather. This resource alone is huge in the fight to educate the public properly about religious extremists and how to better recognize them as a threat.

Openly speaking out about identifying someone who may look like an extremists vs. someone who is literally taking action that is indicative of violent extremism or terrorism is a huge re-
source and needs to be promoted to the fullest. If the public opinion about certain religions is so biased, then promoting this sort of campaign could be invaluable at getting the public to accurately identify and report potential violent extremism. In other words, it is the action, not the individual. The “If you see something say something” campaign is promoted widely on the homepage of the Department of Homeland Security, however, if a person does not access the website and does not live in the New York metropolitan area, then how can they find out about such a great resource?

In fact, a Gallup Poll was distributed to Americans to see if people had even heard of this slogan. In the poll, only 45% of the respondents had heard of the slogan (Ander & Swift, 2013). Furthermore, only 13% correctly identified the slogan as related to preventing terrorism while 12% identified it as related to preventing crime (Ander & Swift, 2013). The “bottom line” of the poll (which is the author’s final comments) revealed that the DHS’ primary market (the entire United States) is completely unaware of the campaign; and more importantly, greater awareness equals the desired outcome: safety (Ander & Swift, 2013).

The Federal Bureau of Investigation’s website is not as informative as the DHS website, however, there are a few good resources for the general public to access. The FBI seeks to provide information about terrorism in general and with less focus on the specific avenues for terrorism (religious, political, etc.). There is one excellent resource that bears highlighting, however, and that is the information regarding the Joint Terrorism Task Forces. This information regarding the role of JTTF’s is an invaluable resource for educational purposes.

The FBI notes that there are currently about 4,200 members currently operating in multiple Joint Terrorism Task Forces across the United States (FBI.gov). Essentially, the role of a JTTF is to provide and enable open information sharing to the public as well as open information
across many different agencies in order to combat terrorism in the United States more effectively (FBI.gov). They essentially combine several different agencies into one group to help study and combat terrorism. These agencies have been instrumental in thwarting many terrorist operations working inside of the United States, and their value is vastly underrated. The only issue here is that the FBI should do more to get this information readily available to the public. Many police departments are too small or are vastly understaffed to be able to support a full time terrorist task force; educating the public on the mission, role, and operation of a Joint Terrorism Task Force seems imperative to combatting not only violent extremists, but terrorism in general.

There are many other topics on the terrorism resource page for the FBI, however, there are relatively few sources to help educate the public on the characteristics, actions, and threats of violent religious extremists in the United States.

As for federal agencies, this is about all the educational information that is available on terrorism that doesn’t become repetitious. The Central Intelligence Agency, the National Counterterrorism Center, and many other sites focus solely on terrorism and are not as concerned with domestic terrorism as the FBI and DHS, nor are they as informative.

Moving down the line toward state and local law enforcement agencies are the Terrorism Fusion Centers. These are very much like the Joint Terrorism Task Forces, however, many of them are ran by large metropolitan police departments and funded by federal grants (kctew.org). Originally started in Los Angeles, the Department of Homeland Security encouraged and assisted many other areas form their own Terrorism Early Warning Groups (kctew.org). These organizations combine several different police departments across one large geographical area as well as DHS agents into one field office in order to collect data and identify potential terrorist threats to the immediate community (kctew.org). The sole purpose of an Early Warning Group is to col-
lect and analyze information and inform and educate the immediate public about terrorism in their community (kctew.org).

The Kansas City branch website is full of excellent educational information regarding terrorism. There are videos for the “see something, say something” and an active shooter scenario, as well as resources documenting the seven signs of terrorism. There are also downloads for terrorism awareness for multiple business types that can help identify suspicious persons and activities. There are, however, no educational documents regarding violent religious extremists. There are also no links to any valuable information regarding current terrorism trends in the area.

The St. Louis Fusion Center is much like the Kansas City site, with the exception of current terrorism trends happening in the United States and the rest of the world, as well as an “upcoming training” tab that contains calendar views for any training sessions they provide on terrorism related topics (stltew.org). There are also tabs for becoming a liaison of the fusion center for law enforcement, first responder, and private sectors (stltew.org). Having the option to become a private sector liaison could potentially lead to excellent educational information distributed by the fusion center and help to keep the public informed (stltew.org). The only drawback: the person must be representing a company or an organization.

Both of these websites, even though they possess great resources, are vastly underused. Both of these fusion centers for Missouri could be using their websites to provide education for the public about threatening seasons, recent terrorist activity in the areas, and education for different types of potential terrorists (such as religious extremists). A quick glance at the New York fusion center website will reveal information that is much the same as the other two sites. The New York website does have a more complete training tab, yet it still only encompasses law enforcement and there are no educational mediums for the public to take advantage of.
After researching many federal, state, and local websites, there is very little information regarding religious extremists or even terrorism in general. While at first it may not seem an important issue, we must remember that people fear a terrorist attack more than they do being murdered or sexually assaulted, which is what most police departments deal with on a daily basis. Therefore, it may not be evident at first about the great need for better education regarding violent extremists, however, given the statistics on public fear as well as the wrongful public opinion regarding certain religious populations, we need to take into consideration that the public may need some better resources in regards to potential violent extremists and terrorists than the biased (and potentially dangerous) media and social media.

While there is little education and information regarding religious extremists for the public, there is plenty for those in law enforcement. Police Chief Magazine ran an article in 2010 noting the efforts of the Los Angeles Police Department in reaching out to the Islamic Community (Stainbrook, 2010). The LAPD created a community policing group whose sole purpose was to reach out to Islamic communities in order to avoid biases, profiling, and the mistreatment of Muslims in their jurisdiction in support of counterterrorism efforts (Stainbrook, 2010). This was an unprecedented article explaining the plan and efforts of this outreach to Islamic communities. Lt. Stainbrook (2010) clearly outlines many of the facets that could propel proper education about Muslims to both the community and the officers. Specifically, the program is broken down into three broad categories: Direct police community engagement, indirect police community engagement, and media communication strategies (Stainbrook, 2010). He goes further to claim that interactions between Muslims and the police have generally been positive, despite the attitude currently displayed in the United States toward Muslims (Stainbrook, 2010). Furthermore, Stainbrook (2010, p. 40) makes this bold statement:
“Many communities in the United States have been affected by terrorism, but possibly none in so many ways as American Muslim communities. The law enforcement profession must realize that Muslim communities in the United States are under both real and perceived scrutiny from the media and government, which sometimes makes positive police-community relations difficult to achieve. Agencies must also engage in some level of specialization to understand the factors underlying this scrutiny and to reduce mistakes during outreach. Further, local police, using time-tested community policing methods, are the best suited to prevent violent extremism in any form.”

Not only does this quote accurately show how Muslims have been affected, scrutinized, and treated since 9/11 by all parties (police, public, media), it shows that this is a trustworthy model that is working and will continue to work in the future. If LAPD can recognize that they are on the front lines of preventing terrorism in the United States, then other large agencies or coalitions of agencies can adopt this same model and implement it with expected success.

The United States Department of Justice also has an interesting article on their website that explains Arab and Islamic culture for police officers to understand as they interview and possibly search Islamic individuals. This reading is nearly invaluable as it attacks stereotypes at the root, showing that many Arabs in the United States are actually Christians as well as the fact that most turban wearing individuals are actually Sikh, who are from India and are not Muslims (U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), n.d.). This document goes further to explain the proper procedures when dealing with Muslims during official police activity. Muslims are very cultural people and have specific cultural rules regarding men speaking to women as well as rules during prayer (DOJ, n.d.). The Department of Justice document goes as far as explaining the accepting of foods and the searching of women’s head coverings. This kind of information can be invalu-
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ble for police officers who are trying to assist communities with large Muslim populations, yet it also could be an effective tool in breaking any profiling habits aimed toward individuals that simply look Muslim. More information like this should be shared among all police departments that may come into contact with Islamic individuals, as it could foster proper relationships with them so as to deter the roots of terrorism. It has already been shown that Muslims in the United States are more than willing to help the police in the detection and eradication of radical Jihadists, and information like this could better help police officers (especially community outreach officers) foster strong relationships with Muslim communities.

It is important to note that there is no evidence that the public uses or even knows about the information contained on the government (federal, state, local) websites. There is very good information on these websites that could potentially help members of the general public when researching terrorism of any kind; however, a citizen must access this information for it to have any real value.

A gripping study of a Muslim community in Chicago produced some of the best information that Police departments could use to better police (and gain intelligence from) Muslim communities. Pecoraro (2008), conducted a focused study of one Muslim community in Chicago and found that overall, Muslim communities distrust the police in general. Furthermore, these communities also believe that they are under increased and unfair surveillance that borderline violates their US rights (Pecoraro, 2008). Overall, the Muslims in this community were very suspicious of the police and any police activity or presence in their communities (Pecoraro, 2008). Part of this stemmed from various negative interactions with the police that included aspects of profiling; while other Muslim community leaders looked into cases where the suspect was con-
vicited, but only because the police were operating surveillance that (in their opinion) was borderline profiling (Pecoraro, 2008).

A second aspect of the Pecoraro study focused on Police & Muslim outreach interactions. Many different agencies across the country have implemented some sort of outreach to Islamic communities in order to better police and understand them. The challenging part is that, on the back burner, police are still trying to thwart Islamic terrorism, and as already stated, the Muslim communities know this. Pecoraro (2008) found that many Muslims don’t trust the police in their own lands, and must be taught to trust the police in the United States. Their trust is so small that they often hide from the police (Pecoraro, 2008). These factors make it extremely difficult for the police to effectively serve Islamic communities, regardless of how culturally and religiously devout the community may be. The findings of the survey showed that Islamic individuals would be very offended upon a number of routine police duties. Things such as walking into a Mosque without taking off their shoes or interrupting during a prayer for the means of conducting an interview were seen as highly offensive (Pecoraro, 2008). In the long run, however, police departments could use some of this information to better educate police officers on Islamic culture, therefore creating an effective bond to gaining information and preventing terrorism.

In summary, the literature review reveals much information that continues to support the assumption about the public and religious extremists, however, we still do not know just where the public gets their information from. The media may paint a solid picture but there are still numerous sources where the general public could gain their insight or thoughts about religious extremists. As the United States continues to see cases of religious ideologies go before the Supreme Court as well as seeing an increase in Islamic culture, we must also remember that the number of domestic terrorist attacks is going up. It is for this reason that the public, who are ar-
guably the first barrier to crime in general, be educated in the warning signs. Obviously Muslims want to cooperate and get the negative stigma off of their religion; likewise, Christians do not want to be classified as violent or hateful. There is a plethora of law enforcement training and education that is already dated, and it would not be that hard to turn some of that information into civilian based education.

We already know that, based off of this information, law enforcement and the people already profile Muslims, yet with all the continued violence throughout the decades by Christian extremist organizations, why does law enforcement not target them as well? Such questions are completely valid and are interesting rabbit holes to continue down, but are not the main focus of this study. As current literature has revealed, the current hypothesis stands that the public needs better information regarding religious terrorists. It seems that law enforcement is the best suited to provide this information based upon current success with their own officers and religious communities.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

For this study, a survey was published to obtain more specific answers concerning public opinion of religious extremists, law enforcement, and the media. In this survey, the respondent was asked many yes or no questions along with some short answer explanations. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

In order to find out what people really believe about certain religions, an anonymous survey was deemed the best approach. It was generated using Surveymonkey survey generator and was open from March 2013 to May 2013. The survey was distributed through social media such as Facebook and Linked-in, and was tagged with a line asking for people to forward the link to the survey on to others. This approach to research was chosen primarily because the respondents needed to first of all feel comfortable enough to take the survey; feel like it was a convenient time to take the survey; and be able to share it in a quick and easy manner. It was believed that since the topic of this research has a tendency to be controversial, people would answer honestly and accurately if they were not handed a paper survey on the street. There was no safeguard for multiple submissions, however. An article published in USA Today discussed the benefits of using social media to “mine” for information using online surveys (Martin, 2012). While the article was mainly showing the benefits of a small business using social media, the results stay the same regardless of the study. The article outlined that using paper surveys costs too much money and manpower; while using social media utilizing an online survey generator (which usually costs a small fee) is more cost efficient, faster, and can generate accurate data better than the aforementioned (Martin, 2012).
The research was centered around three different questions: 1) Does the public have an irrational fear of “religious extremists”; 2) Is the view influenced by religion, social media, or other sources; and finally 3) Does law enforcement provide enough information on religious extremists? There were fourteen open-ended questions that help provide insight to these three main questions; as well as some demographics to provide insight for classification purposes.

Open-ended questions were chosen over traditional multiple choice or rating questions as it was determined that there would be no other way to truly understand the complex thoughts and ideas regarding religious extremists. An objective survey would not provide the proper insight. With open-ended questions, however, there is an opportunity that true thoughts can be grasped. The goal of this survey was to try to capture the first thoughts that came to the minds of respondents as they encountered each question.

Participants in this survey were not based on any certain criteria or qualification. There was no guarantee against multiple submissions; only the integrity of the respondent. The only requirement was that the respondent was a United States citizen and over the age of 18. This particular research needed as many “average” Americans that would respond. Originally, Kansas City was chosen as the primary response group, however, with the advancement of social media and the ease of an electronic survey, this particular research was placed inside of the social media realm to be distributed to anyone anywhere. This would also help to ensure a better sample of the population since the overall goal of the study was to sample the American people, not just the people of one city.

There are also a few threats to validity that must be noted before the results can be assessed. This type of research bears heavily on a person answering honestly, therefore one of the major threats to the validity of this research is the respondent. Would the person answer honest-
ly? That is a serious question when assessing these results. As mentioned before, one of the primary reasons to publish the survey in electronic format verses paper format was to facilitate an atmosphere where people could feel comfortable to be honest with their answers.

A second threat are current events. This research can have a very different outlook depending upon what is happening in the world at the time when a person may take the survey. This is a survey gauging how people feel about terrorism in the realm of religious extremists; consequently, if there has been a recent terrorist attack, the answers may be more toward a fearful trend. Likewise, if there are no current events to facilitate a higher than usual response to terror, then the results may not be fearful and the respondent may likely be more lackadaisical in their view of terrorism. A major threat to this research was the timing of the Boston Bombings. The bombings happened in the middle of collecting responses, and it will be interesting to note any trends based off of date considering the attack.

Current events overseas may also affect the responses of an individual. If there is substantial unrest in the Middle East or if there are new threats made to the United States, this could affect the overall opinion of some respondents. Military campaigns in other parts of the world can also affect the respondents answers in this particular research. Essentially, any unrest in another country or any questionable move (i.e. Russia gives missiles to Syria) could cause an alarm to sound in an individual.

Another threat to validity could also be how in-tune a person is with the news and what type of news broadcast the individual may decide to watch. A certain type of news program could impact a person’s views in a number of ways, depending upon the circumstances. We have already seen how the media likes to present a fresh, dramatic story. This could very well (unnecessarily) help to shape a person’s thoughts as they participate in this research.
Another threat are those in law enforcement may be a threat to validity. Analysts, officers, agents, detectives, instructors, and even professors all have the potential to be a threat. The reasoning is because they could have first hand knowledge about some of these complex issues being studied. For example, if a police analyst were to take the survey and the analyst happens to be part of a terrorism fusion center, this individual would have access to a substantial amount of knowledge about these topics that the average citizen would not possess. However, the decision was made to not exclude anyone in law enforcement regardless of their position. While those in law enforcement may have more insight than the average citizen, they may also take this opportunity to truly share some concerns about how law enforcement on any level is handling these issues.

Finally, a person’s religion is a major threat to the validity of the answers. This is not necessarily a bad thing, however, since one of the major questions in this study is if religion affects a person’s thoughts about terrorism. For instance, if the majority of Christians answer that Muslims are extremists but Christians are not, the research is technically valid because it proves the point.

While all of these present certain threats to the validity of this study, these are all risks that must be assessed and calculated. They are, in a sense, necessary risks when dealing with this subject matter. To outright ask if a certain religion is extreme (with the theme of terrorism) probably will offend some people; but that is almost the point: to truly see how people feel about this topic.

Along with these threats, there are certain limitations that this study experienced. First of all, the study was conducted via the internet instead of face to face, which gives people more time to think about their answer and possibly change it. Keeping the survey open-ended does
create a limitation since there is a backspace button that can be used many times; as opposed to checking yes and moving on. If the survey were to be proctored face to face, people may feel pressed for time and may give their honest opinion without much thought (which is good for this research).

The other limitation of using the internet is that this can only be published on certain social networking sites, which is usually a pool of people that have the same social background, political or religious beliefs, and generally same friends. The other aspect is that, while many have the internet, many do not, and this hurts the study since there is a need to get thoughts and opinions from all social classes, jobs, ethnicities, and walks of life. A face to face paper survey would have given this research the advantage to go anywhere and get anyone (even the homeless population) to participate.

As this survey became live on the internet, many assumptions came to mind as to how the results might turn out. It is easy to look at our media and past studies and immediately think that the survey would produce overwhelming negative thoughts regarding Islamic extremists; yet with the current trend of removing all Christian references as well as the “intolerance” issue, the thought crossed that both religions may be found to be equally as extreme. With regards to this, however, it was assumed that Islamic extremists would take the largest portion. When it came to the thoughts about the media, it was assumed that the results may actually show that people did not think that their media influenced their views. In fact, the assumption was more geared toward their current religion and not so much the media. Finally, in regards to law enforcement response and education, it was assumed that the results would show a poor rating. This is primarily due to the fact that though it has been accomplished, it is extremely controversial (not to mention hard) to effectively pursue and stop a terrorist threat. The survey would only need to mention the USA
PATRIOT Act in order to garner a negative response. Therefore, it was assumed that this survey may actually show that people did not truly understand what a religious extremist was and just how law enforcement professionals countrywide are striving to stop these threats.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

The results from this study are at some points surprising and at others expected. Once again, when attempting to study such a controversial topic as religious beliefs and beliefs on other’s religions, a major factor in determining one’s beliefs concerning others seems to be influenced greatly by their own religion. At other points, pure ignorance determines the belief. The entirety of these results can be found in the Appendices section including the responses. There were 98 completed surveys, however, the number fluctuated through the survey as there were some respondents that skipped some of the questions. The number of responses is lower than expected, especially given the current events in the news. The Boston bombings were at the peak of their media coverage and it was expected that this recent attack might help to promote the survey. As mentioned before, the survey consisted of fourteen open-ended questions with demographic questions at the end.

The survey started with the basis of the entire research: the initial thoughts regarding religious extremists. The question specifically asked for the first thought that came to their mind upon hearing the phrase “religious extremist”. 21% of the responses included the words “middle east”, “Muslim”, or “Islam”, while only 12% of the responses included the words “terrorist”, “terrorism”, or “Jihad”. A fraction of the responses included allusions to Christianity, with phrases such as “Westboro”, “Fred Phelps”, or “Bible-belt”. It is interesting to note these responses, especially since there is a significant number of responses specifically naming Islam. With the recent bombing in Boston, MA, it comes as no surprise that some of these responses would automatically trigger such responses. There were also some other interesting responses
that included things like “9/11”, “media exaggeration”, and “social media”. These responses, while scarce, are very fascinating as they break away from the two norms in this question.

The next question asked where their thoughts about religious extremists came from. In parenthesis there were examples to help respondents understand the question better, such as television, social media, religion, research. There were 98 responses to this question and 61% of the answers had the words “media”, “social media”, “television”, or “newspapers” in their response. This question alone shows singlehandedly that people’s ideas are shaped by the type of media they engage in. We know that news reports are inevitable, but what does it mean when more people are getting their ideas about religious extremists from (biased) news reports than from individual or credible, objective research? There were sporadic responses that did not include the previous keywords. These included things like “individual research”, “religious ideology”, “the Bible”, “parents”, and “school”. No other response came close to the majority response that media had in all the answers to this question.

The next three questions asked if the person thought a certain religion was extreme. Christians, Muslims, and Jews were substituted for each other in these questions.

According to the answers, 46% of respondents believe that some Christians are extreme, 36% say Christians in general are not extreme, and 18% believe that Christians in general are extreme (not some but all). Of the ones who believe that Christians are not extreme, many respondents stated that Christians are not violent in their actions, leading them to the conclusion that Christians are not extreme. By the same token, the ones who believed that Christians were extreme mentioned the Westboro Baptist Church as an example of an extreme Christian organization. This section had the full 98 responses.
The Muslim category changed things by a large margin. 30% believe that Muslims are extreme and attribute it to some sort of violence or attack. 20% did not believe Muslims are extreme; and a staggering 50% of the respondents believed that some were, with many responses claiming that one cannot judge a religion based off of a few extremists. This section contained only 96 of the 98 responses. What is truly fascinating about these answers is the fact that, while people can admit that Muslims are extreme, they cannot let the answer end without a comment--there must be some justification given as to why they think that Muslims are extreme as well as the fact that the person was willing to admit that a certain religion was extreme yet also stated that it was only a few of the whole.

The Jewish category was a last minute addition to the survey and presented surprising results. 19% of respondents said that Jews are extreme, and many of those respondents attributed this to them protecting themselves and their land. The large margin in this category situated in the “no” column. 54% said that Jews are not extreme with comments that they only attack when they themselves are attacked, or, that the Jewish people are not seeking converts. 27% said that some of them are. The responses for the Jewish questions are extremely interesting since the respondents are insinuating that extremism deals with actively (sometimes violently) seeking and making converts, while it seems that most of the respondents believe Jewish people are just protecting their land. There were few responses that mentioned Jews living in the United States. This section also contained only 96 of the 98 responses.

After compiling and looking at these three questions collectively, a very strange statistic was revealed: Jewish people were found to be more extreme than Christians. Muslims still enjoy the top spot of all three choices, however, with the Christian and Jewish category almost added together to make up the percentage. What is truly interesting is how the people find that Jewish
people more extreme than Christians. Further research in this area would have to be explored in order to find out why Jewish people earned a higher spot in this particular questionnaire. There are a number of possibilities: news, current events, and general belief about Jewish people in general. The table below shows the results this survey.

Figure 2: Percentage of population who think Muslims, Christians, and Jews are extreme.
The next question stated a definition for religious extremism and then asked if this changed the previous answers in any way. 97 out of 98 respondents answered that this did not change their answers and that they still held the same. The one person who did change their answer stated that, based on this definition, most Muslims would not fit this yet most right-wing Christian extremists would. There were some who said it could slightly change their definition; however, they were only removing violence links. This definition referred to excessive or immoderate actions, which could include violence or extreme propaganda or any number of other thoughts.

The next questions shift focus to the fears of the people and their beliefs concerning the police and religious extremists. The transitional question here asked if people believed that religious extremism is a problem nationally, locally, or both. All 98 persons responded to this question with 88 of them answering that it was a problem. The breakdown is as follows: 21 agreed it was a problem nationally, 1 believed it was only locally, and 37 believed it was both. There were other answers for this question as well, prompting three other categories: 17 had no clear answer, 13 believed that it is actually worldwide, and 9 said that it was not a problem. To clarify, I was only interested in finding out about religious extremist problems inside of the United States. Religious extremism is a problem in many other countries and is very widespread in the Middle East, yet it is a very subtle and somewhat new trend here in the United States. We do not have the issues that the Middle East has faced over the years, yet with the onset of religious terrorism, it is fascinating to see if there is a true problem in the minds of the public.
Next the survey asked if the police could do a better job at handling religious extremists. The majority (51%) answered in reference to first amendment rights and police infringing on those rights. A large portion within this group answered that it is not the job of the police to concern themselves with religious extremists, but to merely respond when a crime occurs; or simply that it is not their problem. There was one response that is interesting to highlight; this response stated that the police are not concerned with groups, only crimes. A statement like this ignores the very fact of gangs, political groups, and other high crime groups. This was a particularly interesting response. Only 21% answered that they thought the police could use more training and try to do better. Of these answers, there were scattered responses that citizens could use some education as well. What some of these respondents fail to see is the analytical aspect of policing. Intelligence gathering is one of the most important jobs of the police in this day and age, especially concerning building a case against any person or groups of people (gangs, organized crime, or sects of extreme religions). Following the more training aspect, some of the other yes answers included more training and more awareness to help the police respond and protect the public better. Most of the “yes” answers focused primarily on cultural or religious training; while
most of the “no” answers focused more on the protection of the constitution. What is alarming is that 29% of the respondents either had no opinion, did not know how to answer the question, or did not understand the connection between the police and religious extremism. This is alarming in lieu of the last decade of advancement in intelligence and information gathering that law enforcement at every level has established.

The next questions asked if they feared for their future safety because of religious extremists. A staggering 70% answered no, with 97 out of 98 responses to this question. Many commented that the reason they do not fear is because of their location (rural, small town, not in a big city, etc.) or because they are not bringing attention to themselves to warrant any attack. From this question alone we can gain invaluable insight into this issue. The mentality that a terrorist attack “can’t happen here” is a dangerous mentality to have and can be argued that this is the mentality that the United States possessed prior to the September 11th attacks. However, by the same token, we can also note that this is technically a “good” statistic. If people really don’t fear for future attacks, then Islamic extremists who try to instill fear into the American people aren’t getting the message across. This is a very fine line to walk on--one where people’s lives are not hindered day to day by fear yet people are fully aware that they do not live in a bubble and an attack could happen at any moment. Getting the proper mentality is part of the struggle that law enforcement is and will have to combat in the future of this evolving enemy.

The next in the sequence asked about a hypothetical terrorist attack and the subsequent law enforcement response. While the majority previously stated that it is not law enforcement’s role to handle extremists; this shifts when it comes to an actual police response. 50% of the respondents felt that their local law enforcement would respond well to an actual attack. The most commonly stated reasons were training and preparation, especially since the 9/11 attacks. 22%
stated that their local law enforcement would respond poorly, with some stating the response would be terrible. Reasons for this included a lack of communication with federal agencies and a general lack of training on terrorism. There was a third group of responses that cannot be classified into either “good” or “bad”. 28% of the respondents answered in this category frequently stated things like “hopefully” or “it depends” and a few other responses that stated the situation should be handled only by the federal agencies. The pie chart below represents this data graphically.

*Figure 4: How well would law enforcement respond to an attack?*

The final question asked before the demographics was if local police and/or the US government provide enough education on the subject of religious extremists. 63% of the respondents
answered no, there is not enough education on this subject. After the initial no, however, the opinions differed as to the best way to educate the public. Many suggested the use of social media while others said that it needs to be done from a credible source and not the news. Still yet, there were a handful of other opinions that it should be part of a curriculum in schools or colleges. This shows that the public, even though it is such a small scale, desires some education regarding religious extremists. One respondent went as far to say that there is only information after an attack and that information on warning signs or other threats may be more beneficial. On the other side of the coin, there were three other categories that were all split at 12% each. Some thought the education was sufficient, others stated that it is not the job of the government or the police to educate on religious extremists. Finally, the last group had either no opinion or were not sure about current education.

The demographics for this study were not what was expected nor did it produce quite the desired diversity. Women took the majority with 59%, and nearly all respondents were caucasian (white). All the respondents were United States citizens. There was a wide range of ages on this survey with the highest number representing the “above 50” category (33%). The next closest categories were lumped together with 18-24, 31-40, and 41-50. The highest education completed was a Bachelor’s degree (33%) and the highest annual income was over $75,000 with the $50-75,000 range only a few points behind. There are graphs below that represent all of this data respectively.
Figure 5: Annual income of respondents.

Figure 6: Gender of respondents
Figure 7: Age of respondents.

Figure 8: Highest education attained by respondents.
As far as religious beliefs go, the majority identified with the Christian religion (74%), with others sporadically in the Mormon, Agnostic, and no religion categories. The graph below shows all the responses and their respective numbers. While this study actually focused on the two mainstream religions in the United States, it seems strange that no responses were obtained from any Islamic believers. The Pew Research Center conducted a national survey of over 35,000 people and found that only about .06% of Americans identified with the Islamic religion, while the overwhelming majority identified with the Christian religion (including Catholic) (Pew Research Center, 2013). More interestingly (and it helps to understand the results of this study a little clearer), there were more Mormons and Jews than Muslims identified in the research; the second highest number: unaffiliated (Pew Research Center, 2013).

Figure 9: Religion of respondents
The city of residence with the highest amount of responses was Missouri (55% overall); there were also responses from Wyoming, Oklahoma, Indiana, Georgia, Virginia, Tennessee, Florida, Wisconsin, Iowa, Arkansas, and Washington. With this information it can be easy to see why people wouldn’t necessarily fear a terrorist attack (being in the 65idwest). This information does, however, give a representation from all across the United States, even though the numbers are not as high in some of the states that were represented. This is good, since the research extended outside of any certain geographical area that could have a more dominant set of beliefs (e.g. Northeast being mainly liberal). The graph below gives a pictorial representation of the states given in this survey.

![Figure 10: Respondent’s city of residence.](image-url)
The research clearly shows that there is an overwhelming majority that associates religious extremism with Islam, even though when asked directly about Islam and violence the answers were less favorable and more widespread. There is an overwhelming correlation between the media and the thoughts of the average American. This is something that needs to be fully understood and embraced, and will be mentioned again as we transition to the recommendations section of this study. Finally, there was a favorable response toward the police and their dealings with extremists and terrorists. As it came to education, however, the answers were more split and widespread as to who should be doing the educating.

One final thought regarding this survey and the results that were obtained can also be categorized as another limitation of the study itself. There were only three religions represented in this study (Christian, Mormon, and Atheist) and Islam was not one of them. Therefore, it would have been helpful to get at least one Muslim during the course of this survey, however, it played its purpose for seeing what non-Muslims believe about the relationship of Islam and violence. In fact, it would have been nice to obtain more than just four different religions. It would have been much better to obtain responses from Jews, Buddhists, and Sikhs as well.

The other limitation this survey experienced was that of the sample size. This has been mentioned previously, however, it bears mentioning again. A larger sample size would have been much better for such a large undertaking, however, the sample size for say, Kansas City (which was somewhere around 24 out of 96) may be more favorable, yet it is still very small in regards to a much more mainstream study. Simply put, this research needed more responses with more diversity.
CHAPTER 5
SUGGESTIONS

Based on the responses from the surveys, there are a number of suggestions that can be made. Even though the survey responses were not as high as originally hoped, we can still make some inferences based upon the answers.

First, from the research, it seems that very few people know about Fusion Centers. Missouri has two functioning fusion centers: One in St. Louis and one in Kansas City. Both of these fusion centers are staffed and operated for the primary purpose of monitoring, warning, and educating the public about terrorism. The initial recommendation based off of the study would be for fusion centers to come out of the dark and start interacting with the public about their role and about terrorism in general. The Kansas City Terrorism Early Watch Center is the primary source for terrorist activities in Kansas City and is staffed by civilians, police officers, and government agents from the surrounding area. While the Kansas City Police Department, like many others, utilizes social media, it does not seem like these services are used to their potential to impact the area and truly get the message about religious extremism and terrorism out.

Second, based upon this survey it is evident that the people’s thoughts regarding religious extremists were biased. The main question is where the bias came from. The survey successfully answered this question, but how are we to attack this problem? First, it may be helpful for police departments and some of the federal agencies to begin “advertising” on facebook and twitter. Putting links to certain studies and research that has been conducted would be a great start. Also, it might be helpful for a representative of some of these groups to hold an educational class annually about terrorism and the current trend of terrorism in the United States. Fusion centers and other agencies must work together to combat the common misconceptions about terrorists and
extremists presented by the media today. For instance, if CNN ran a story about Islamic sleeper cells in the United States and presented information that they look and act like a traditional Muslim, yet are secretly violent terrorists waiting for a command from their leader; wouldn’t this immediately frighten every American that knew a traditional Muslim? Would Muslims that adhere to their faith and wear traditional Islamic garb be subject to more prejudice and immediate public disdain?

The media controls public opinion, and there is no way around that. However, it would be very good for agencies to get the truth about terrorism to the general public. It should not take a college course for people to have common misconceptions cleared about extremists. The true question now becomes “How do we accurately convey the truth?” The answer, I think, lies in the literature review.

In the literature review there were references to a few different police departments that were utilizing community policing models with great success. Based upon the answers provided in this survey coupled with the findings in the literature review, it would seem that the best answer is for there to be community policing models that try to educate the public about religious extremism and terrorism. These groups could work simultaneously with the other community policing teams that are currently trying to reach out to the Islamic crowd. Citizens are the first barrier to crime, because the police need people to contact them about crime. If this is the case then it can hold true for helping combat terrorism. People should get their information from law enforcement agencies-and law enforcement agencies have a plethora of great information to share-but making that information easier for a regular citizen to access is the true task. For instance, how many people besides those who currently work in law enforcement or some sort of physical security know and understand the proper reporting of terrorist threats? How many more
understand the seven signs of terrorism presented by the Department of Homeland Security? We must do a better job at educating the public, if not for any other reason than to dispel the amount of fear terrorists have placed upon the United States. Dispelling this fear does not begin with law enforcement nor does it begin with Islamic communities; it begins with the general public learning the truth of terrorism and having this misplaced fear properly addressed.
In conclusion, we have learned some very useful information that, going forward, could benefit many police departments as well as hopefully dispel the level of fear placed on the people of this country concerning terrorism and religious extremists. Looking back at the three areas of research for this study, we can successfully answer all three with legitimate solutions that could make significant changes in the criminal justice realm.

First, the main research question regarding what an average person believes about religious extremists can be summed up by saying that they are fearful of them. There are biases and prejudices, yet it seems that many do not want to get involved in much religious talk or debates, especially concerning what one believes. So, the first course of order would be to attack this fear, as previously stated. The fear that surrounds religious extremism is probably the most concerning piece of evidence gained from this study. In order for law enforcement to be effective, they must work at defeating this fear.

The second question posed was if law enforcement needed to provide education in regards to religious extremists. It seems that the people are satisfied with the response that law enforcement provides, though it can always be nitpicked after the fact. Truly, however, it seems that law enforcement should be the ones to take on this role of educating the public. Law enforcement agencies receive the best training and are able to find the most credible information about religious extremists and terrorists. Getting this information from a police department instead of a biased media source seems the best avenue for an individual to properly understand
extremists and their behavior. Education from the police will effectively dispel the fear that surrounds most of terrorism.

Finally, we needed to understand the impact social media has on terrorism. This question is easily answered after we understand the different tactics that terrorists use. While it is not the direct fault of social media, and the media certainly has a Constitutional right to publish the materials they do; in this current age of terrorism and growing terror threats, it may be beneficial for news agencies to properly understand what their fanatical coverage of terrorism is actually doing. The impact of media is that it is helping spread a fear and bias of religions that is not accurate with the information we currently possess. Going forward, there should never be a censoring of the press, but there should be guidelines and an understanding from law enforcement to the news agencies that most of what they are doing is not helping law enforcement, but is actually helping terrorists in reaching their desired goals.

Hopefully going forward we can learn to utilize the media as well as encourage law enforcement entities to foster better community policing efforts in regards to combating religious extremists and terrorists and reducing the amount of violent crime associated with these specific groups.
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APPENDIX A
DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Below is the exact survey that was presented. It was placed in electronic format using Survey Monkey’s survey generator.

Instructions: This is a survey for a Master’s Degree Thesis project from the University of Central Missouri. Please answer all questions to the best of your ability. Participation in this survey is voluntary. If you prefer not to answer a question, leave it blank; if you prefer to not complete the survey, please place an ‘X’ through it and hand it back in. Your identity will remain anonymous and will not be recorded in any way for the purposes of this survey. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Please do not put any identifying information on this survey (name, address, etc.). This study will ask you questions regarding religious extremists as they relate to terrorism. Religious extremism is one of two known motivators for terrorism, domestic and foreign.

1. What is the first thought that comes to your mind when you hear the phrase ‘religious extremist’?

2. Where did you get these thoughts from? Religious ideology, Parents, Social Media (TV, Facebook, etc.), individual research, other (please explain):

3. Do you believe Christians are extreme? Y N
   Why or why not?

4. Do you believe Muslims are extreme? Y N
   Why or why not?

5. Do you believe Jews are extreme? Y/N
   Why or why not?

6. One of the definitions of ‘extremism’ is “of, relating to, or characterized by immoderate or excessive actions, opinions, etc.” (From the online dictionary, retrieved from www.dictionary.com)
   Does this change your answers in any way?

7. Do you think religious extremism is a problem nationally, locally, or both? Yes No
Why or why not?

8. Do you think America’s police could do a better job in handling religious extremists? If yes, then how; if no, then why not?

9. Do you feel safe from religious extremists? Yes No

Why or why not?

10. Do you fear for your future safety because of religious extremists? Yes No

Why or why not?

11. If a terrorist attack were to happen, how do you think your local law enforcement would handle the situation?

12. Do you believe your local law enforcement AND the U.S. government provide enough education about religious extremism? If no, what could they do to better educate the public?

13. What is your religion? If you choose to answer, what is your denomination or faction, if applicable?

Demographics:

Sex: Male Female

Race: Caucasian African-American Hispanic Non-Hispanic Asian Other: Prefer not to answer

U.S. Citizen: Yes No If no, what nation are you a citizen of? _______________

Age: 18-24 25-30 31-40 41-50 Above 50 Prefer not to answer

Highest education completed: High school diploma GED Associates Degree Bachelor’s Degree Master’s Degree Doctorate None of the above

Annual income (approximate): under $20,000 $20,000-$35,000 $35,000-$50,000 $50,000-$75,000 $75,000 and above

City and State of residence:
APPENDIX B

DETAILED TIMELINE OF TERRORIST ATTACKS

This is a more complete timeline of terrorist attacks in the United States. The timeline shows attacks inside of the United States as well as against the United States.

Reference:

1920: Sept. 16, New York City: TNT bomb planted in unattended horse-drawn wagon exploded on Wall Street opposite House of Morgan, killing 35 people and injuring hundreds more. Bolshevik or anarchist terrorists believed responsible, but crime never solved.

1975: Jan. 24, New York City: bomb set off in historic Fraunces Tavern killed 4 and injured more than 50 people. Puerto Rican nationalist group (FALN) claimed responsibility, and police tied 13 other bombings to the group.

1979: Nov. 4, Tehran, Iran: Iranian radical students seized the U.S. embassy, taking 66 hostages. 14 were later released. The remaining 52 were freed after 444 days on the day of President Reagan's inauguration.

1982–1991: Lebanon: Thirty US and other Western hostages kidnapped in Lebanon by Hezbollah. Some were killed, some died in captivity, and some were eventually released. Terry Anderson was held for 2,454 days.

1983: April 18, Beirut, Lebanon: U.S. embassy destroyed in suicide car-bomb attack; 63 dead, including 17 Americans. The Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.


Dec. 12, Kuwait City, Kuwait: Shiite truck bombers attacked the U.S. embassy and other targets, killing 5 and injuring 80.
1984: Sept. 20, east Beirut, Lebanon: truck bomb exploded outside the U.S. embassy annex, killing 24, including 2 U.S. military.

Dec. 3, Beirut, Lebanon: Kuwait Airways Flight 221, from Kuwait to Pakistan, hijacked and diverted to Tehran. 2 Americans killed.

1985: April 12, Madrid, Spain: Bombing at restaurant frequented by U.S. soldiers, killed 18 Spaniards and injured 82.

June 14, Beirut, Lebanon: TWA Flight 847 en route from Athens to Rome hijacked to Beirut by Hezbollah terrorists and held for 17 days. A U.S. Navy diver executed.


Dec. 18, Rome, Italy, and Vienna, Austria: airports in Rome and Vienna were bombed, killing 20 people, 5 of whom were Americans. Bombing linked to Libya.

1986: April 2, Athens, Greece: A bomb exploded aboard TWA flight 840 en route from Rome to Athens, killing 4 Americans and injuring 9.

April 5, West Berlin, Germany: Libyans bombed a disco frequented by U.S. servicemen, killing 2 and injuring hundreds.

1988: Dec. 21, Lockerbie, Scotland: N.Y.-bound Pan-Am Boeing 747 exploded in flight from a terrorist bomb and crashed into Scottish village, killing all 259 aboard and 11 on the ground. Passengers included 35 Syracuse University students and many U.S. military personnel. Libya formally admitted responsibility 15 years later (Aug. 2003) and offered $2.7 billion compensation to victims' families.

1993: Feb. 26, New York City: bomb exploded in basement garage of World Trade Center, killing 6 and injuring at least 1,040 others. In 1995, militant Islamist Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman and 9 others were convicted of conspiracy charges, and in 1998, Ramzi Yousef, believed to have been the mastermind, was convicted of the bombing. Al-Qaeda involvement is suspected.

1995: April 19, Oklahoma City: car bomb exploded outside federal office building, collapsing wall and floors. 168 people were killed, including 19 children and 1 person who died in rescue effort. Over 220 buildings sustained damage. Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols later convicted in the antigovernment plot to avenge the Branch Davidian standoff in Waco, Tex., exactly 2 years earlier. (See Miscellaneous Disasters.)

1996: June 25, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia: truck bomb exploded outside Khobar Towers military complex, killing 19 American servicemen and injuring hundreds of others. 13 Saudis and a Lebanese, all alleged members of Islamic militant group Hezbollah, were indicted on charges relating to the attack in June 2001.

1998: Aug. 7, Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: truck bombs exploded almost simultaneously near 2 U.S. embassies, killing 224 (213 in Kenya and 11 in Tanzania) and injuring about 4,500. 4 men connected with al-Qaeda 2 of whom had received training at al-Qaeda camps inside Afghanistan, were convicted of the killings in May 2001 and later sentenced to life in prison. A federal grand jury had indicted 22 men in connection with the attacks, including Saudi dissident Osama bin Laden, who remained at large.

2000: Oct. 12, Aden, Yemen: U.S. Navy destroyer USS Cole heavily damaged when a small boat loaded with explosives blew up alongside it. 17 sailors killed. Linked to Osama bin Laden, or members of al-Qaeda terrorist network.

2001: Sept. 11, New York City, Arlington, Va., and Shanksville, Pa.: hijackers crashed 2 commercial jets into twin towers of World Trade Center; 2 more hijacked jets were crashed into the Pentagon and a field in rural Pa. Total dead and missing numbered 2,992: 2,749 in New York City, 184 at the Pentagon, 40 in Pa., and 19 hijackers. Islamic al-Qaeda terrorist group blamed. (See September 11, 2001: Timeline of Terrorism.)

2002: June 14, Karachi, Pakistan: bomb explodes outside American consulate in Karachi, Pakistan, killing 12. Linked to al-Qaeda.

2003: May 12, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: suicide bombers kill 34, including 8 Americans, at housing compounds for Westerners. Al-Qaeda suspected.

2004: May 29–31, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: terrorists attack the offices of a Saudi oil company in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, take foreign oil workers hostage in a nearby residential compound, leaving 22 people dead including one American.

June 11–19, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: terrorists kidnap and execute Paul Johnson Jr., an American, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. 2 other Americans and BBC cameraman killed by gun attacks.

Dec. 6, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia: terrorists storm the U.S. consulate, killing 5 consulate employees. 4 terrorists were killed by Saudi security.


2006: Sept. 13, Damascus, Syria: an attack by four gunman on the American embassy is foiled.

2007: Jan. 12, Athens, Greece: the U.S. embassy is fired on by an anti-tank missile causing damage but no injuries.
Dec. 11, Algeria: more than 60 people are killed, including 11 United Nations staff members, when Al Qaeda terrorists detonate two car bombs near Algeria's Constitutional Council and the United Nations offices.


June 24, Iraq: a suicide bomber kills at least 20 people, including three U.S. Marines, at a meeting between sheiks and Americans in Karmah, a town west of Baghdad.

June 12, Afghanistan: four American servicemen are killed when a roadside bomb explodes near a U.S. military vehicle in Farah Province.

July 13, Afghanistan: nine U.S. soldiers and at least 15 NATO troops die when Taliban militants boldly attack an American base in Kunar Province, which borders Pakistan. It's the most deadly against U.S. troops in three years.

Aug. 18 and 19, Afghanistan: as many as 15 suicide bombers backed by about 30 militants attack a U.S. military base, Camp Salerno, in Bamiyan. Fighting between U.S. troops and members of the Taliban rages overnight. No U.S. troops are killed.

Sept. 16, Yemen: a car bomb and a rocket strike the U.S. embassy in Yemen as staff arrived to work, killing 16 people, including 4 civilians. At least 25 suspected al-Qaeda militants are arrested for the attack.

Nov. 26, India: in a series of attacks on several of Mumbai's landmarks and commercial hubs that are popular with Americans and other foreign tourists, including at least two five-star hotels, a hospital, a train station, and a cinema. About 300 people are wounded and nearly 190 people die, including at least 5 Americans.


April 10, Iraq: a suicide attack kills five American soldiers and two Iraqi policemen.

June 1, Little Rock, Arkansas: Abdulhakim Muhammed, a Muslim convert from Memphis, Tennessee, is charged with shooting two soldiers outside a military recruiting center. One is killed and the other is wounded. In a January 2010 letter to the judge hearing his case, Muhammed asked to change his plea from not guilty to guilty, claimed ties to al-Qaeda, and called the shooting a Jihadi attack "to fight those who wage war on Islam and Muslims."

Dec. 25: A Nigerian man on a flight from Amsterdam to Detroit attempted to ignite an explosive device hidden in his underwear. The explosive device that failed to detonate was a mixture of powder and liquid that did not alert security personnel in the airport. The alleged bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, told officials later that he was directed by the terrorist group Al Qaeda.
The suspect was already on the government's watch list when he attempted the bombing; his father, a respected Nigerian banker, had told the U.S. government that he was worried about his son's increased extremism.

Dec. 30, Iraq: a suicide bomber kills eight Americans civilians, seven of them CIA agents, at a base in Afghanistan. It's the deadliest attack on the agency since 9/11. The attacker is reportedly a double agent from Jordan who was acting on behalf of al-Qaeda.

2010: May 1, New York City: a car bomb is discovered in Times Square, New York City after smoke is seen coming from a vehicle. The bomb was ignited, but failed to detonate and was disarmed before it could cause any harm. Times Square was evacuated as a safety precaution. Faisal Shahzad pleads guilty to placing the bomb as well as 10 terrorism and weapons charges.

May 10, Jacksonville, Florida: a pipe bomb explodes while approximately 60 Muslims are praying in the mosque. The attack causes no injuries.

Oct. 29: two packages are found on separate cargo planes. Each package contains a bomb consisting of 300 to 400 grams (11-14 oz) of plastic explosives and a detonating mechanism. The bombs are discovered as a result of intelligence received from Saudi Arabia's security chief. The packages, bound from Yemen to the United States, are discovered at en route stop-overs, one in England and one in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

2011: Jan. 17, Spokane, Washington: a pipe bomb is discovered along the route of the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial march. The bomb, a "viable device" set up to spray marchers with shrapnel and to cause multiple casualties, is defused without any injuries.

2012: Sept. 11, Benghazi, Libya: militants armed with antiaircraft weapons and rocket-propelled grenades fire upon the American consulate, killing U.S. ambassador to Libya Christopher Stevens and three other embassy officials. U.S. secretary of state Hillary Clinton said the U.S. believed that Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, a group closely linked to Al Qaeda, orchestrated the attack.

2013: Feb. 1, Ankara, Turkey: Ecevit Sanli detonates a bomb near a gate at the U.S. Embassy. Sanli dies after detonating the bomb. One Turkish guard is also killed. Didem Tuncay, a respected television journalist, is injured in the blast. Unlike the bombing at the embassy in Benghazi last September, the U.S. government immediately calls the bombing a terrorist attack. According to Turkish officials, the attack is from the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party, which has been labeled a terrorist organization by the U.S. and other nations.

April 15, Boston, Mass.: multiple bombs explode near the finish line of the Boston Marathon. Two bombs go off around 2:50 in the afternoon as runners finish the race. At least three people are killed. One is an eight year old boy. More than 170 people are injured. Three days later, the FBI releases photos and video of two suspects in the hope that the public can help identify them.
Just hours after the FBI releases the images, the two suspects rob a gas station in Central Square then shoot and kill a MIT police officer in his car. Afterwards, the two men carjack a SUV and tell the driver that they had set off the explosions at the marathon. Police pursue the vehicle into Watertown. During the shootout, a MBTA officer is shot and one of the suspects, identified as Tamerlan Tsarnaev, age 26, is killed. A suicide vest is found on his body. The other suspect, Dzhokhar A. Tsarnaev, age 19, remains at large for several hours, causing a massive manhunt and lockdown for all of Boston, Cambridge, and many other surrounding communities. The manhunt ends when he is found alive, but seriously injured, hiding in a boat behind a house in Watertown. The two suspects are brothers and had been living together on Norfolk Street in Cambridge. They have lived in the U.S. for about a decade, but are from an area near Chechnya, a region in Russia.
APPENDIX C
IMAGES FROM INSPIRE MAGAZINE

These are screenshots of the latest issue of INSPIRE magazine. They are not secretive about the types of actions they are trying to inspire other lone wolf extremists to do. This was retrieved from http://publicintelligence.net/aqap-inspire-issue-11/.
Public Perception of Religious Extremists 88

Because of the offers and warnings given to leave this path:

Where first pursued the path of jihad with Al-Qaeda, I faced many hardships, among them:

1. Offers of money
   a. Offers of rewards
      Once I was told: You are a respected man, you are a veteran of Islam, why will you follow your interest in by following Al-Qaeda? Then I was offered money directly.

2. Warnings
   They threatened that people will be warned from me, they will hate and back down from them, they threatened me with Jih, death, and these grey wealth and assets.

A number of months passed by. After that, being called, we once would call me and the brothers from Al-Qaeda had not assigned any work to me at that time. These on the right path had such a change, especially in the end of the enemy's demands.

A few times, after the people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe" and they will not be touched! But the have suddenly found those before them, and Al-Qaeda will surely make all these people who are in trouble, and we will surely make evident the harm.

Extracted raw text: "My dear mom, I will lay down my life for Islam. I'm gonna die for Islam. Insha'Allah."