Review Essay:
Top 50 Books on Terrorism and Counterterrorism

By Joshua Sinai

Terrorist rebellions, in all their configurations, constitute the primary warfare threats facing the international community. This was especially the case following September 2001, when al-Qaeda demonstrated that it had world class ambitions to inflict catastrophic damages on its adversaries. In other conflicts, such as the Palestinian-Israeli arena, terrorist targeting is primarily localized, although as demonstrated by Hizballah's rocket and guerrilla warfare against Israel in summer 2006, even localized conflicts have regional and international repercussions. Because of the worldwide reach of al-Qaeda and its affiliates, including what are referred to as al-Qaeda-inspired "self-starter" home-grown cells in Western Europe, North America, and elsewhere, many nations have been upgrading their homeland security defenses, and calling on their academic communities to provide analytical understanding of the origins, nature and magnitude of the terrorist threats around the world and how to counteract and resolve them. In response, academic courses and research institutes have been proliferating at colleges and universities worldwide, with graduate certificates and degrees offered in terrorism studies. To meet the great demand for academic and public policy resources on this subject, the publishing industry has been releasing a plethora of books on terrorism in general, the groups that engage in terrorist warfare, the radical religious movements that drive individuals to join terrorist groups and employ terrorist tactics on their behalf, the conflict zones where such warfare is being waged, and the types of counteraction that governments are employing in response.

Despite the great attention being expensed on terrorism and counterterrorism studies, however, the general state of the discipline is uneven. One problem is that terrorism is first and foremost a covert activity, with governments' intelligence services, but not academic analysts (with few exceptions), possessing primary data about terrorist groups and their activities, causing terrorism studies to be less scientifically valid than the natural sciences. This is especially the case in compiling data on terrorist incidents, whether aborted, thwarted, or "successful," or the size and leadership trees of terrorist organizations, since such data is largely unavailable in open sources. In some flagrant cases, certain writers on terrorism have been found to fabricate their data. Fortunately, there still are plenty of excellent books on this subject to merit recommending them to general and academic readers.

The books reviewed in this essay are divided into nine sections, which are not intended to be mutually exclusive: textbooks on terrorism, using the social sciences to study terrorism, terrorism and the Internet, radical Islam, suicide terrorism, 9/11 and its aftermath, Palestinian terrorism, terrorism in the United States, and counterterrorism.

This list of 50 books is not intended to be final, but will be continuously expanded with additional titles. Readers are encouraged to nominate additional books for inclusion in future lists.

Textbooks on Terrorism

Despite its relative brevity (133 pages of text), Leonard Weinberg's <u>Global Terrorism: A Beginner's Guide</u> [Second Edition] (Oneworld Publications, 2008; $14.95) succeeds in explaining the history of terrorism, how to define terrorism, what is new about al-Qaeda's type of terrorism, the conditions that give rise to terrorism, the types of individuals that become terrorists, the nature of governments' responses, and how terrorism ends. The author is a veteran academic specialist on terrorism and readers will greatly benefit from the accumulated wisdom that is sprinkled throughout this wonderfully written book.

Gus Martin's <u>Understanding Terrorism: Challenges, Perspectives, and Issues</u> [Second Edition] (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2006; 696 pages; $63.95) is one of the finest stand-alone, comprehensive textbooks for university courses. Its 696 pages cover the spectrum of all issues involved in studying terrorism, ranging from the early history of terrorism, how terrorism is defined, causes of terrorism, the "morality" of terrorist violence, the objectives, tactics and targets of terrorists, the role of the media, the phenomenon of religious terrorism, the role of women in terrorism, the nexus between terrorism and organized crime, terrorism in

the United States and internationally, the components of counterterrorism, and future terrorism trends. Each chapter is organized pedagogically, with opposing viewpoints and issues for classroom discussion.

Since its original publication in 1998, Bruce Hoffman's Inside Terrorism [Second Edition] (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006; 456 pages; $24.95) has become one of the most widely read books on terrorism. This revised and expanded edition incorporates new developments and trends in terrorism, particularly since 9/11's catastrophic attacks by al-Qaeda. The book's chapters discuss how to define terrorism, the origins of contemporary terrorism, the internationalization of terrorism, the role of radical religions in driving terrorism, suicide terrorism, the exploitation by terrorist groups of old (e.g., print) and new (e.g., internet) media, terrorists' objectives, "tradecraft," technological innovations in their use of weapons, targeting, and future trends in terrorist warfare. The author may be faulted for adopting the thesis that a strategic logic drives suicide terrorism (when, in fact, it is hugely self-destructive to their group's cause), but otherwise the book's comprehensiveness will generate much interest from general readers.

Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century: International Perspectives [Three Volumes] (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007; 2016 pages; $400.00), edited by James J.F. forest, brings together chapters by dozens of experts (including this reviewer) to discuss terrorist threats around the world and how to defeat them. Volume I covers "Strategic and Tactical Considerations", Volume II examines "Sources and Facilitators", and Volume III discusses "Lessons Learned from Combating Terrorism and Insurgency". Dr. Forest is Director of Terrorism Studies at West Point's Combating Terrorism Center.

Christopher C. Harmon's Terrorism Today [Second Edition] (New York: Routledge, 2007; 248 pages; $39.95) is a substantially revised and updated edition of the author's original edition, published in 2000. The textbook is comprehensive in scope, covering the history of terrorism, strategies of terrorist groups, terrorist modus operandi, technologies and tactics, counterterrorism, and an analysis of how terrorism ends.

Using the Social Sciences to Study Terrorism

Despite the limitations in data acquisition due to the covert nature of terrorist activities, the academic study of terrorism has greatly benefited from concepts and methodologies produced by the social sciences. As a result, academic analysts are able to draw on social science disciplines to investigate characteristics of terrorism such as the underlying causes driving terrorist rebellions, the psychological nature of terrorist operatives, and the factors driving individuals to become radicalized and join terrorist groups.

Mapping Terrorism Research: State of the Art, Gaps and Future Direction, edited by Magnus Ranstorp (New York: Routledge, 2007; 352 pages; $37.95), is an attempt to take inventory of the strengths and weaknesses in terrorism research in order to identify a set of priorities for future research. Fourteen academic experts (including this reviewer) contributed chapters on new trends in terrorism studies, the impact of 9/11 on terrorism research, responding to the roots of terror, the socio-psychological component of terrorist motivation, al-Qaeda's warfare, recruitment of Islamist terrorists in Europe, the landscape of intelligence analysis and counterterrorism, terrorism in cyberspace, and the components of terrorism and counterterrorism studies.

Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, Reality and Ways Forward (New York: Routledge, 2005; 288 pages; $47.95), edited by Tore Bjorgo, is the product of an experts workshop (in which this reviewer participated) that was held in Oslo, Norway, in June 2003. This was the first time that an academic meeting had ever been held to explore, in a systematic manner, concepts and methodologies to conduct analysis on root causes of terrorism.

John Horgan's The Psychology of Terrorism (New York: Routledge, 2005; 224 pages; $41.95) is one of the best applications of a social science discipline, in this case, psychology, to explain the drivers that motivate individuals to become terrorists, function as terrorists, and, in ideal cases, disengage from terrorism. Also noteworthy is the author's discussion on how to define terrorism and conduct academic research on terrorism.

Ely Karmon's Coalitions Between Terrorist Organizations: Revolutionaries, Nationalists and Islamists (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2005; 426 pages; $176.00) is an important and innovative study of how terrorist organizations form cooperative coalitions and how they function within the changing international system. Dr. Karmon focuses on the cooperation between European left-wing terrorist organizations from 1984 to 1988 and cooperation between European and Palestinian terrorist organizations during the period of 1968 to 1990, in order to use these findings to develop a broader theory concerning cooperative coalitions between organizations

involved in international terrorism in the 1990s and early 21st century. In a masterful 70-page chapter on the Islamist terrorist networks, the hypotheses generated by the previous case studies are tested to determine whether the new terrorist actors who emerged in the 1990s, such as al-Qaeda and other Islamist groups around the world, who are driven by religious motivation, act in a similar fashion as their ideological and nationalist predecessors in forming cooperative coalitions.

In Forecasting Terrorism: Indicators and Proven Analytical Techniques (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2004; 103 pages; $40.00), Sundri Khalsa identifies 68 indicators of terrorist activity, based on terrorist capability and intention. These indicators, when applied to actual terrorist group activity, are intended to be used in a warning framework to anticipate terrorist activity that requires early warning. A CD-ROM is included to graphically display the forecasting system and explain the author's methodology.

The actual and potential resort by terrorist groups to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) warfare is an issue of great concern to governments that might be targeted by such intentions. One of the best treatments of this subject is The New Face of Terrorism:

Threats from Weapons of Mass Destruction (New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2002; 336 pages; $29.95) by Nadine Gurr and Benjamin Cole.

Terrorist organizations and criminal enterprises, especially narco-traffickers, share a number of characteristics, especially adaptability to changes in governmental law enforcement responses. In From Pablo to Osama: Trafficking and Terrorist Networks, Government Bureaucracies, and Competitive Adaptation (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007; 312 pages; $24.95), Michael Kenney examines how narcotics traffickers and terrorists "learn" to adapt to new countermeasures against them and the lessons from such "learning" experiences that can be used for more effective governmental responses.

Terrorism and the Internet

As today's generations of terrorists are hunted by counterterrorist organizations, they possess a distinct advantage that their older predecessors lacked: access to computers, the worldwide Internet and cyberspace's myriad technological benefits in conducting communications and warfare. According to Gabriel Weimann's Terror on the Internet: The New Arena, the New Challenges (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2006; 320 pages; $20.00), which is the first comprehensive study of this issue, terrorists have established a sophisticated and dynamic presence on the Net, which has completely transformed the way they communicate, obtain information, conduct propaganda and issue threats. They use it to radicalize and recruit new members, raise funds and train, organize and carry out warfare, and then broadcast such incidents on their own websites.

The Internet has become the "seductive hypermedia" for radical Islamic terrorists, with official and unofficial Web sites, forums and chat-rooms that appeal to supporters worldwide. Most Web sites are intended to advance a group's propaganda to increase their supporting audience, while some have operational intentions. How can we defeat such terrorism in cyberspace? Hypermedia Seduction for Terrorist Recruiting, edited by Boaz Ganor, Katharina Von Knop and Carlos Duarte (Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2007; 300 pages; $150.00) is an important collection of papers by an eclectic group of international experts (in which this reviewer participated) in terrorist use of the Internet, advertising and graphic design specialists, who had been convened to formulate a comprehensive response campaign. The volume's chapters examine radical Islamist websites, the use of symbolism in Islamic fundamentalism and Jihad, mining the Jihadist network in cyberspace, the use of the Internet as a "seductive" recruitment technology, and practical ways to counter the "seductive" terrorist web.

Militant Islam

Militant Islam has not emerged in a vacuum, but is the product of the confluence of historical and contemporary religious drivers and "real world" factors. To understand the narrative that is central to Muslim belief, it is essential for those engaged in countering religiously-inspired radicalization and terrorism to first read the Quran. The following five books provide an excellent overview of the revival of militant Islam, within the context of the larger Muslim world, which is largely mainstream.

Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004; 320 pages; $19.95) by Olivier Roy, discusses the driving forces behind the revival of militant Islam in Western Europe.

Mr. Roy, a leading French academic expert on political Islam, explains how many Muslims in Western Europe have turned to radical Islamic ideologies as a way of coping with political and psychological crises in their own lives and what they perceive to be threats against their Muslim brethren around the world.

In Fundamentalism: The Search for Meaning (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005; 254 pages; $16.95), Malise Ruthven provides a penetrating analysis of the nature of fundamentalism around the world, including Islam. Fundamentalism in other religions, such as Christianity and Judaism, are discussed, as well. Mr. Ruthven is a British writer who has taught at several universities.

Bassam Tibi's Political Islam, World Politics and Europe: Democratic Peace and Euro-Islam versus Global Jihad (New York: Routledge, 2007; 328 pages; $41.95), assesses the impact and manifestations of political Islam, particularly in Europe, which faces a growing conflict between radical segments within its large Muslim minority and the continent's democratic and pluralist institutions and values. Dr. Tibi, one of the world's foremost experts on political Islam and Arab nationalism, is Professor of International Relations at the University of Goettingen, in Germany and a visiting professor at Cornell University.

In Bad Faith: The Danger of Religious Extremism (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2007; 327 pages; $26.00), Neil J. Kressel, a professor of psychology at William Paterson University, incisively explains the nature of religious extremism. To Dr. Kressel, religious extremists are "those persons who — for reasons they themselves deem religious — commit, promote or support purposely hurtful, violent, or destructive acts toward those who don't practice their faith."

 It is not only Islam that fosters religious extremism, Dr. Kressel points out. Christianity and Judaism have their share of anti-secularists who elevate sacred religious texts, such as the Bible or Koran, to a position of supreme authority in a state. While Dr. Kressel is critical of religious extremism, this is emphatically not an anti-religion treatise. He recommends that once a religiously extremist minority within a religion begins to act violently, then mainstream leaders must immediately identify and "self-police" such outbreaks. In this way, constructive elements have the best chance of overtaking destructive ones. All those in the counterterrorism community who wish to understand and respond to the characteristics of religious extremism that lead to terrorism will greatly benefit from reading Dr. Kressel's important book.

Unmodern Men in the Modern World: Radical Islam, Terrorism, and the War on Modernity (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007; 304 pages; $19.99) by Michael Mazarr, is one of the best diagnoses of the resentment by Islamist forces toward modernity, which has led them to utilize terrorism to retaliate against the effects of modernity on traditional life in their respective societies. In one of his many insightful passages, Dr. Mazarr, a professor at the National War College, writes that modernization challenges the religious and spiritual element of tradition by threatening to secularize society "in order to replace a religious view of the world with a scientific, rationalist one... modernization and modernity place faith under stress, call it into greater question, threaten to trade it out in favor of rationalist humanism. And one result, unsurprisingly, is a flight back to religion, so that the actual effect of modernization in many contexts is an upwelling of devotion."

Suicide Terrorism

One of the manifestations of radical Islamic terrorism is suicide martyrdom bombings, in which the goal of the perpetrator is to kill himself (or herself) together with the intended victims. Suicide Bombers: Allah's New Martyrs (London: Pluto Press, 2005; 288 pages; $27.95) by Farhad Khosrokhavar, a French social scientist, discusses the concept of martyrdom in Islam, how it expresses itself in Iran, Palestine (vis-à-vis Israel), and Lebanon, and al-Qaeda's use of martyrdom operations in its worldwide operations.

In The Martyr's Oath: The Apprenticeship of a Homegrown Terrorist (John Wiley & Sons Canada, 2005; 288 pages; $36.95) Stewart Bell, a Canadian journalist, chronicles the story of Mohammed Jabarah, a young Canadian Muslim who became radicalized and recruited by al-Qaeda for a bombing mission in Singapore in 2001. By investigating why an intelligent young person who grew up in a comfortable middle class family in Canada (although originally from Kuwait) would end up as an operative in a terrorist organization in East Asia, Mr. Bell searches for answers on how best to counter the proliferation of similar types of recruits in North America and Europe into radical Islamic terrorism.

9/11 and its Aftermath

According to Evan F. Kohlmann's extensively researched <u>Al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe: The Afghan-Bosnian Network</u> (New York: Berg, 2004; 256 pages; $19.95), the Hamburg cell that had carried out the 9/11 attacks across the continent was an outgrowth of the infiltration of Europe by al-Qaeda's operatives and allies beginning in the early 1990s. As a fragile state with a Muslim majority, Bosnia afforded Osama bin Laden's Saudi, Egyptian and Yemeni lieutenants, and their North African "Jihad foot soldiers" with a safe haven to establish the infrastructural seeds for the European and Canadian "sleeper cells" that would threaten Western European states and America in the succeeding years.

Once al-Qaeda started its devastating bombing campaign against America in East Africa in 1998, the world's attention began to focus on the group and its leader, Osama bin Laden. One of the best of the first crop of books on this topic was Peter Bergen's <u>Holy War: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden</u> (New York: Free Press, 2002; 320 pages; $14.95), which was based on first-hand investigative reporting and interviews with bin Laden, his associates, and counterterrorism officials. In 2006, Mr. Bergen published <u>The Osama bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of al Qaeda's Leader</u> (New York: Free Press, 2006; 528 pages; $15.00), which updates his account by drawing on primary documents and interviews with more than fifty people who knew bin Laden personally.

Terry McDermott's <u>Perfect Soldiers: The Hijackers: Who They Were, Why They Did It</u> (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 2008; 368 pages; $14.95) is an excellent account of the personal histories of al Qaida's 9/11 hijackers and the beliefs and motivations that drove them to commit such horrendous acts. McDermott, a <u>Los Angeles Times</u> correspondent, traveled to some 20 countries to conduct research for the book.

Although primarily focusing on the al-Qaeda-led Global Salafi Jihad, Marc Sageman's <u>Understanding Terror Networks</u> (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004; 232 pages; $29.95) is considered one of the most original and innovative social science studies conducted on how individuals are driven to join terrorist organizations. Utilizing his background as a forensic psychiatrist, political sociologist and former CIA case officer in Pakistan, Dr. Sageman's study is based on his knowledge of radical Islamic ideologies and compilation of dozens of biographies of terrorist operatives which enable him to generate a myriad of findings on trends in recruitment and operational warfare by today's Jihadi operatives.

Dr. Sageman's <u>Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty First Century</u> (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008; 208 pages; $24.95), updates and expands his earlier work on what drives radical elements of a society to terrorism. According to Dr. Sageman, the pre-9/11 al-Qaeda has become morphed into a social movement consisting of several thousand members. This makes al-Qaeda even more dangerous because as a social movement it has dramatically grown beyond its organizational origins.

How do al-Qaeda's supporters become radicalized? Dr. Sageman formulates a four phase process that depends on an individual's sense of moral outrage in response to perceived suffering by fellow Muslims around the world; how he might interpret such moral outrage within the context of a larger war against Islam; whether or not the sense of "moral outrage" resonates with one's own experience, for example, discrimination or difficulty in making it in Western society and, finally, being mobilized by networks that take one to the next level of violent radicalization in the form of terrorist cells.

To counter the social movement inspired by al-Qaeda, Dr. Sageman proposes a strategy to "take the glory and thrill out of terrorism." Military operations against them should be conducted swiftly and precisely, with such terrorists considered "common criminals." The sense of "moral outrage" by young Muslims can be diminished by helping to resolve local conflicts that al-Qaeda's propaganda highlights as injustices against the Muslim world. The young jihadists want to become heroes, so they need to be provided with alternative role models, such as Muslim soccer stars and other successful community leaders.

Dr. Sageman's incisive observations based on carefully examined evidence, astute insights and scholarship make "Leaderless Jihad" the gold standard in al-Qaeda studies.

To understand how terrorist groups operate, it is crucial to uncover how they go about recruiting new operatives to maintain themselves as viable organizational networks and, if possible, expand their activities. Such insight is provided in <u>The Lesser Jihad: Recruits and the Al-Qaida Network</u> (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Little-

field Publishers, Inc., 2007; 174 pages; $24.95), by Elena Mastors and Alyssa Deffenbaugh. Focusing primarily on the al-Qaeda network, the authors examine "why, how, and where individuals" become involved in that network, which they define as "financial backers and fund-raisers, operators, logisticians, recruiters, trainers, and leaders." It is important to uncover such recruitment patterns to enable counterterrorism agencies to derive potential strategies for dealing with the "entry" points into their networks. By focusing on the al-Qaeda network's recruitment processes, The Lesser Jihad is an important contribution to our understanding of the measures required to counter and defeat such a terrorist network.

Brynjar Lia's Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of Al Qaeda Strategist Abu Mus'ab al-Suri (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008; 256 pages; $28.95), is a biography of an important al Qaida theoretician. In addition to writing an influential 1,600 page book, al-Suri had trained a generation of young jihadists in the Afghan training camps and helped establish the organization's European networks. Syrian-born Al-Suri was captured in Pakistan in late 2005. Lia is a research professor at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI).

Palestinian Terrorism

While the threats posed by al Qaida and its worldwide affiliates occupy the attention of most books, other terrorist conflicts also merit close attention. For example, in a stunning upset, in January 2006 Hamas's political arm won the Palestinian parliamentary elections. Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007; 336 pages; $17.00) by Matthew Levitt explains how Hamas was able to blend terrorism, political activism, and social welfare services to become the dominant force in the Palestinian territories. The book is meticulously documented.

Anne Marie Oliver and Paul Steinberg explore the underpinnings of the cult of martyrdom among the Palestinians in The Road to Martyr's Square: A Journey Into the World of the Suicide Bomber (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006; 304 pages; $19.95). Their book is based on their extensive field research in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which enabled them to see first hand and collect documentation and video materials to which most outsiders are not privy. According to the authors, suicide bombings have become so deeply ingrained in Palestinian society as a 'cult of martyrdom' that "lengthy indoctrination and training sessions for suicide bombers were no longer deemed necessary. Indeed, the script was so well known that someone who wanted to become a bomber, it was said, was simply given a bomb; he decided the coordinates for himself." This beautifully written yet disturbing book offers a unique perspective on the intifada and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, written by authors who demonstrate great understanding of the Palestinians' internal and external struggles.

Anat Berko's The Path to Paradise: The Inner World of Suicide Bombers and Their Dispatchers (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007; 216 pages; $49.95) is an insightful examination of Palestinian suicide bombers and the men who dispatch them on their missions. While concrete grievances against Israel and its occupation policy — primarily in the West Bank (since Israel has withdrawn from the Gaza Strip) — drive most Palestinian suicide bombers to attack Israelis, the cult of death through martyrdom is reinforced daily through indoctrination and hate propaganda in Palestinian mosques, schools, media and popular music. How can suicide bombings be stopped? The key, Dr. Berko believes, rests with Muslim religious leaders, who "have the moral responsibility to forcefully condemn suicide bombing attacks and to issue unequivocal *fatwas* [religious rulings] against them." They must emphatically state that those who carry out such attacks "not only do not automatically go to paradise, but that they automatically go to hell." The book contains a wealth of information about Palestinian society, such as the impact of polygamous families and arranged marriages on the sons and daughters who decide to become suicide martyrs.

Bernard Rougier's Everyday Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam among Palestinians in Lebanon (Cambrdige, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007; 333 pages; $28.95) is based on the author's intensive field work in the Palestinian refugee camp of Ain al-Hilweh, the country's largest concentration of Palestinians. Mr. Rougier is a Middle East scholar affiliated with Sciences-Po in Paris. Although he is chiefly concerned with how militant pan-Islamism took hold in Ain al-Hilweh, he offers extensive evidence of similar developments in Nahr al-Bared and other refugee camps. He shows how a growing number of disaffected Palestinian refugees now view themselves as part of the global geography of radical Islam, pointing out that this is a position that has led them to identify with the rhetoric of al-Qaeda. Mr. Rougier concludes that militant Islamism among the Palestinians can be mitigated by re-invigorating the Palestinian-Israeli peace process and offering the Palestinians a viable state.

Terrorism in the United States

 In Holy War on the Home Front: The Secret Islamic Terror Network in the United States (New York: Sentinel, 2006; 256 pages; $21.00) Harvey Kushner (with Bart Davis) assert that for more than two decades a secret network of Islamic extremists belonging to al-Qaeda and Hamas has been entrenching itself in American society, where some of them function as leaders of local and national Islamic organizations and charities, religious preachers, soldiers, drug smugglers, and prison chaplains. Mr. Kushner is chairman of the department of criminal justice at Long Island University and a well-respected terrorism expert.

The Terrorist Next Door: The Militia Movement and the Radical Right (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2002; 416 pages; $27.95) by Daniel Levitas cautions us that far-right extremist groups in America have always posed a terrorist threat, as exemplified by Neo-Nazi groups such as the Aryan Nations and individuals such as Timothy McVeigh. Extensively researched and documented, this is the most definitive account ever written on America's far-right militia movements.

U.S. Counterterrorism

The political and intelligence failures by the Clinton and Bush administrations to prevent 9/11 have resulted in the publication of numerous books, of which nine are briefly reviewed here. The first was Breakdown: How America's Intelligence Failures Led to September 11 (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing Inc., 2002; 256 pages; $19.95) by Washington Times' investigative reporter Bill Gertz, which places the blame on the lack of political will by successive administrations and Congress to vigorously counter al-Qaeda's growing threat.

In Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003; 285 pages; $36.95 hardcover; $20.95 paper), Paul Pillar provides a framework for understanding the history and current posture of U.S. counterterrorism policy. The concluding chapter provides recommendations for improving America's counterterrorism capability. Dr. Pillar is a former deputy chief of the CIA's Counterterrorist Center, and currently a visiting professor at Georgetown University.

With the benefit of time and a full complement of staff to conduct its research and call on expert witnesses, The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004; 568 pages; $10.00) provides the most comprehensive critique of the events and policies that led to 9/11 (although since its publication questions have arisen over its glossing of evidence that more may have been known than what was included in its report by U.S. intelligence units about al-Qaeda's pre-9/11's preparatory activities).

Daniel Benjamin's and Steven Simon's The Next Attack: The Failure of the War on Terror and a Strategy for Getting it Right (New York: Times Books, 2005; 352 pages; $16.00), believe that America is losing the war on terrorism. Due to the Bush administration's post-September 11 policies, they write, America's strategic position is weakening; increasing numbers of Muslims are joining the radical Islamists in terrorist violence. Jihadist ideology has become the bloody banner for grievances around the world, "merging into a pervasive hatred of the United States, its allies, and the international order they uphold." This hatred has loosened Muslim religious and social inhibitions on violence that it now justifies an attack on "infidels" such as the United States using weapons of mass destruction. As a consequence of what Messrs. Benjamin and Simon (but not necessarily others) consider to be the Bush administration's failure to understand that radical Islam is a transnational problem and the intervention in Iraq, which has turned that country into the "central theater of the jihadist struggle," they argue that "Unwittingly, we are clearing the way for the next attack — and those that will come after."

One of the most sweeping and extensively researched narrative of the events leading to al-Qaeda's 9/11 attacks is provided by Lawrence Wright's The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11 (New York: Knopf, 2006; 480 pages; $27.95). It also examines al-Qaeda's activities from the perspectives of American counterterrorism agencies that had tried, but ultimately failed, to stop them.

In The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America's Pursuit of Its Enemies Since 9/11 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006; 384 pages; $27.00) veteran journalist Ron Suskind argues that the failure to anticipate 9/11 led the Bush Administration to adopt a new preemptive counterterrorism doctrine in which even the possibility of a one percent likelihood of a nuclear detonation.

The Terrorist Watch: Inside the Desperate Race to Stop the Next Attack (New York: Crown Forum, 2007; 272 pages; $26.95) by Ron Kessler is an insightful and revealing look at how U.S. counterterrorism agencies and their top players conducted America's attacks on al-Qaeda and its affiliates prior to and following September 11. Kessler is a veteran Washington-based investigative journalist on national security and the author of 16 books. His unparalleled access to top players in America's counterterrorism campaign allowed him a rare glimpse into their tradecraft, making The Terrorist Watch a riveting account.

Evolution of U.S. Counterterrorism Policy [Three Volumes], edited by Yonah Alexander and Michael B. Kraft (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007; 1456 pages; $299.00), is a comprehensive collection of key documents, statements, and testimony on U.S. government counterterrorism policies, laws and programs as they evolved prior to and following 9/11. One of the co-authors, Mr. Kraft, is a former high level State Department official, so the volume greatly benefits from his extensive knowledge of these issues.

Michael A. Sheehan's Crush the Cell: How to Defeat Terrorism Without Defeating Ourselves (Random House, 2008; 320 pages; $24.95), recommends using "offensive operational intelligence" to identify and defeat terrorist cells, some of which are loosely affiliated "wannabes". Mr. Sheehan is a former Deputy Commissioner for Counterterrorism in the New York City Police Department and Ambassador at Large for Counterterrorism at the State Department.

Counterterrorism - General

In The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle: A Guide for Decision Makers (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2005; 334 pages; $39.95) Boaz Ganor, one of Israel's top counterterrorism academic experts, identifies terrorist threats and delineates ways in which governments can most successfully counteract them. The "puzzle" of the book's title hints at the myriad ways a response to a terrorist threat can take shape in the form of policy making, intelligence collection and analysis, deterrence, and offensive and defensive countermeasures (and how to avoid the "boomerang effect").

Emanuel Gross's The Struggle of Democracy Against Terrorism: Lessons from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Israel (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2006; 320 pages; $35.00) is one of the best studies on the legal challenges and moral dilemmas faced by democracies in balancing security against civil liberties, human rights and the rule of law in countering the threats posed by terrorists. Mr. Gross covers the spectrum of relevant topics including defining terrorism, the laws of war in countering terrorism, interrogating terrorists, the powers of military commanders in administering areas where terrorists operate (such as in Iraq or the West Bank), administrative detention, the right to privacy by citizens during emergency periods, the use of civilians by terrorists or armies as human shields, and thwarting terrorist acts through targeted killings of terrorist leaders and operatives.

Making the Nation Safer: The Role of Science and Technology in Countering Terrorism, by the National Research Council of the National Academies (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2002; 440 pages; $41.36), is considered one of the "classic" studies in homeland security. Comprehensive in scope and authoritative in its technical expertise, the volume's chapters discuss scientific and technical approaches to mitigate vulnerabilities in key infrastructural sectors, such as transportation, information and telecommunications systems, health systems, the electric power grid, food and water supplies, and others that may be susceptible to terrorist attacks. It also discusses nuclear and radiological threats, bioterrorism, toxic chemicals and explosive materials, cyberterrorism, and potential threats to energy systems, such as the electrical power grid and oil and gas. For each of the critical infrastructure sectors discussed, the volume provides recommendations on how to apply knowledge and technology to make the nation safer, as well as the research and development programs that are required to produce innovations to protect the nation against future threats.

Homeland Security: A Complete Guide to Understanding, Preventing, and Surviving Terrorism (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005; 556 pages; $75.00) by Mark A. Sauter and James Jay Carafano is a theoretical and practical treatment of terrorism, counter-terrorism and homeland security. The book is divided into three sections: the emergence of homeland security as a modern concern, how to understand terrorism and an overview of America's homeland-security system. Although primarily written as a textbook for the academic market—with each chapter beginning with an overview and learning objectives and ending with a chapter summary, discussion topics, notes on sources and even a quiz—"Homeland Security" is much more than a textbook. It is an indispensable reference resource for those seeking to understand how terrorists operate and the structures and

mechanisms that have been developed to respond to the magnitude of the terrorist threats confronting us.

Countering Terrorism and WMD: Creating a Global Counter-Terrorism Network (New York: Routledge, 2006; 300 pages; $45.95), edited by Peter Katona, Michael D. Intriligator and John P. Sullivan, brings together experts from a range of disciplines to discuss the components necessary for comprehensive counter-terrorism. What sets this book apart from other initiatives are the authors' specializations in clinical medicine, public health, economics, political science and public policy, law enforcement, military and intelligence.

Daniel Byman's The Five Front War: The Better Way to Fight Global Jihad (Wiley, 2007; 320 pages; $25.95) proposes a comprehensive approach to countering terrorism, involving the use of intelligence, law enforcement, a counter narrative to al-Qaeda's ideology, reforms in the targeted countries, and strong alliances among governments. Dr. Byman directs Georgetown University's Security Studies Program and the Center for Peace and Security Studies.

Joshua Sinai *is a program manager for counterterrorism studies, The Analysis Corporation (www.theanalysiscorp.com), USA.*