

## Counterterrorism Bookshelf: 17 Books on Terrorism & Counter-Terrorism-Related Subjects

Reviewed by Joshua Sinai

*So many books are published on terrorism- and counterterrorism-related subjects that it is difficult to catch up on a large backlog of monographs and edited volumes received for review. In order to deal with this backlog, this column of capsule reviews consists of short single paragraph overviews and Tables of Contents of 17 books, including also several books published less recently but still meriting attention. Some of the new books will be reviewed in future issues of 'Perspectives on Terrorism' as stand-alone reviews. The books are listed topically.*

### General

**John P. Sullivan and Robert J. Bunker (Eds.), *Strategic Notes on Third Generation Gangs* [A Small Wars Journal – El Centro Anthology]** (Indianapolis, IN: Exlibris, 2020), 674 pp., US \$ 26.99 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-7960-9561-6.

The contributors to this important edited anthology present an updated multidisciplinary approach to analyzing what they term a third generation street gang (3Gen Gang) theory, which was first introduced in a series of papers by co-editor John P. Sullivan in 1997. Today, the contributors argue, the threats have evolved to encompass sophisticated gangs with transnational reach, which are also accompanied by political dimensions, particularly in countries such as Mexico, that affect the communities and nations where they operate, resulting in a threat to global security, as well. Dr. Sullivan served as a Lieutenant with the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and is a Senior Fellow with "Small Wars Journal-El Centro." Dr. Bunker is an Adjunct Research Professor, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, and is a Senior Fellow with "Small Wars Journal-El Centro."

*Table of Contents:* Prologue On 3GEN Gangs; Foreword: Narco-Insurgent-Gang-Terror (NIGT) Phenomenon; Introduction: Third Generation Gangs from Theory to Reality; Part I: Third Generation Gangs; Future Conflict: Criminal Insurgencies, Gangs and Intelligence; Third-Generation Gangs and Criminal Insurgency in Latin America; Part II: Third Generation Gangs Strategic Notes [23 Notes]; Part III: Military Trained Gang Members; Background; Third Generation (3Gen) Gangs and Military Trained Gang Members (MTGMs); The Threat of Street Gangs, Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs, and Domestic Terrorist/Extremist Groups with Military-Trained Members [4 Notes]; Part IV: Conclusions; Conclusion: The Past, Present and Potential Future of Third Generation Gang Studies; Postscript: Gangs and Conflict: Armed Conflicts are on the Rebound and They are Harder than Ever to Stop; Afterword: Mexico's Forever War; Appendices: Appendix 1: Gangs & Drug Trafficking in Central America Conference; Appendix 2: Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13): A Law Enforcement Primer; Appendix 3: Iraq and the Americas: 3 GEN Gangs Lessons and Prospects; Appendix 4: Gangs in Baghdad; Appendix 5: Gangs, Criminal Empires and Military Intervention in Cape Town's Crime Wars; Selected Readings.

### Counterterrorism

**Jürgen Brandsch, *Killing Civilians in Civil War: The Rationale of Indiscriminate Violence*** (Boulder, CO: FirstForumPress/A Division of Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2020), 239 pp., US \$ 45.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-6263-7863-6.

This is an important examination of the dilemmas faced by perpetrators, whether governments or insurgents, in their use of indiscriminate violence targeting civilians in their wars. By examining these issues, the author presents proposals on how to prevent such atrocities. The author is the head of the Project on Small Arms and

Light Weapons Control at the Bonn International Center for Conversion.

*Table of Contents:* Targeting Civilians in Civil Wars; What Do We Know About Indiscriminate Violence?; State Use of Indiscriminate Violence; Nonstate Use of Indiscriminate Violence; Conceptual Building Blocks; A Theory of Group-Selective Violence; How Does Indiscriminate Violence Work in Practice?; Assessing the Effects of Indiscriminate Violence; Group-Selective Violence Across History; Violence Against Civilians in Ethnic Wars; Conclusion: Does Group-Selective Violence Work?

**Bruce W. Dayton and Louis Kriesberg (Eds.), *Perspectives in Waging Conflicts Constructively: Cases, Concepts, and Practice*** (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 234 pp., US \$ 122.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 42.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-4422-6551-6.

The contributors to this volume offer diverse perspectives on mitigating and resolving major conflicts through what they term a “constructive conflict approach,” which they apply to examining how this worked in lessening the destructive impact of those conflicts in cases such as Israel and the Palestinians, Britain in Northern Ireland, and dealing with aggressive countries such as North Korea. Co-editor Dayton is Associate Professor of Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation and director of the CONTACT Peacebuilding Program at the SIT Graduate Institute, School for International Training, and co-editor Kriesberg is Associate Professor of Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation and director of the the same program as Bruce Dayton..

*Table of Contents:* Introduction; Communication, Constructiveness, and Asymmetry in Nonviolent Action Theory and Practice; Transitional Justice and Reconciliation: Prerequisite or Burden for Constructive Conflict Transformation?; Strategic Nonviolent Action: Waging Constructive Conflict against Authoritarianism; Peaceful Separation: The Politics of Constructive Dissolution; Factors for De-escalation: Israel and a Shift to Constructive Conflict; The State of Constructive Conflict in Northern Ireland; What Is a Constructive Peace Process?: Inclusion in Peace Negotiations; Non-Provocative Defense in the Asia-Pacific Region; and Global Contexts for Waging Conflicts Constructively.

**Louis Kriesberg and Bruce W. Dayton, *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*** [Fifth Edition] (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 452 pp., US \$ 122.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 56.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-4422-4326-2.

This textbook presents a comprehensive framework for analyzing how a spectrum of social conflicts can be resolved through a “constructive conflict approach.” As a textbook, it discusses key principles and core ideas about conflicts and how they can be resolved, as well as the roles of social movements and non-governmental organizations, including conflict actors, and the use of various persuasive means to de-escalate conflicts, which are applied to a series of case studies. Post-conflict activities that are likely to result in long term peace are also discussed.

*Table of Contents:* List of Figures and Tables; Preface and Acknowledgments; Acronyms; Analyzing Social Conflicts; Underlying Conditions for Social Conflicts; The Emergence of Conflicts; Alternative Conflict Strategies; Adopting Conflict Strategies; Escalation of Conflicts; De-escalation of Conflicts; Mediation in Conflicts; Settling Conflicts; Conflict Outcomes and Consequences; Synthesis, Specifications, and Challenges; Appendix A: Selected Organizations in the Field of Constructive Conflicts; Appendix B: Selected Websites Relating to Social Conflicts.

**Will Irwin, *Decision-Making Considerations in Support to Resistance*** [JSOU Report 20-1] (MacDill AFB, FL: Joint Special Operations University Press, March 2020), 86 pp., (No cost information), [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-9417-1546-8. URL: [https://jsou.libguides.com/ld.php?content\\_id=53517726](https://jsou.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=53517726).

This monograph examines the components of strategic- and operational-level decision-making, including the elements of risk and legality, involved in providing unconventional warfare support to a resistance force as a foreign policy option. These are applied to supporting insurgent resistance in unsuccessful cases such as the Bay of Pigs event against the Castro regime in Cuba in April 1961, and successful cases such as supporting local Afghani forces in removing the Taliban in late 2001. The author is a Resident Senior Fellow at the Joint Special Operations University. He is a retired U.S. Army Special Forces officer with experience as a defense analyst, researcher, historian, instructor, and writer.

*Table of Contents:* From the Director; Foreword; About the Author; Introduction; Influencing the Decision-Making Process; Prospect: Opportunity and Timing; Peril: Risks and Consequences; Premise: Assumptions and Feasibility; Propriety: Sovereignty and Intervention; Conclusion; Acronyms.

**William Knarr and Mark Nutsch, *Village Stability Operations and the Evolution of SOF Command and Control in Afghanistan: Implications for the Future of Irregular Warfare*** [JSOU Report 20-2] (MacDill AFB, FL: Joint Special Operations University Press, March 2020), 174 pp., (No cost information), [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-9417-1544-4. URL: [https://jsou.libguides.com/ld.php?content\\_id=53882670](https://jsou.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=53882670).

In this conceptually important monograph, the authors examine how the evolution of the Special Operations Forces (SOF) command and control mechanisms can operate effectively in countering terrorist groups at the village level in countries with weak sociopolitical systems, such as Afghanistan. Dr. Knarr is a non-resident Senior Fellow at the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) in Tampa Florida. Former U.S. Army Major Nutsch is a consultant to the Special Operations Forces community.

*Table of Contents:* Foreword; About the Authors; Introduction; A War of Necessity; Searching for Context and Solutions from the Past; VSO/alp Programs; Adapting Village Stability Operations Concepts to Reality; Top-Down Interagency (Supporting Governance and Development) Meets Bottom-Up Counterinsurgency; Activating the Special Operations Joint Task Force: Synchronizing Missions and Managing Resources; International and Multinational Contributions; Special Operations Forces/Conventional Forces Integration; Discussion/ Summary: Successes, Failures, and Implications; Acronyms.

**Phil Miller, *Keenie Meenie: The British Mercenaries Who Got Away with War Crimes*** (London: Pluto Press, 2020), 352 pp., US \$ 99.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 17.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-7453-4079-1.

A fascinating and detailed account of the covert operations of Keenie Meenie Services, a British private mercenary company, which was involved in providing “shadowy” paramilitary services to clients in conflict regions such as Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland, and Nicaragua. The account is based on the author’s investigative reporting, including access to newly declassified evidence about the British government’s tacit support for the company’s operations. The author, a veteran British journalist and producer, is a staff reporter for Declassified UK, an investigations unit focusing on British foreign policy.

*Table of Contents:* Prologue: Piramanthanaru Massacre; Introduction: Return of the Privateers; White Sultan of Oman; Bodyguards and Business Building; Teenage Rebellions; The Upside Down Jeep; Oliver North’s British Mercenary; The Exploding Hospital; Mercenaries and Mujahideen; The English Pilot; Grenades in Wine Glasses; Bugger off my Land!; Epilogue.

## ***Religion and Terrorism***

**Charles Selengut, *Sacred Fury: Understanding Religious Violence*** [Third Edition] (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 250 pp., US \$ 100.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 39.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-4422-7684-0.

This is a well-written, insightful and authoritative examination of the connection between extremist religious faiths and violence around the world. All the major religiously-based violent extremist groups are covered, such as Christian Identity, Hindu extremists, Jewish fundamentalist groups, and Islamist groups such as al-Qaida and the Islamic State. Significant questions are discussed such as how “religious” is this type of terrorist violence and the factors that motivate extremist adherents to conduct terrorist attacks on behalf of their beliefs. The author is professor of sociology at County College of Morris, New Jersey.

*Table of Contents:* Introduction: The Study of Religion and Violence; Fighting for God: Scriptural Obligations and Holy Wars; Psychological Perspectives; Apocalyptic Violence; Civilizational Clashes, Culture Wars, and Religious Violence; Religious Suffering, Martyrdom, and Sexual Violence; Conclusion: Toward a Holistic Approach to Religious Violence.

## ***Jihad***

**Iraj Bashiri, *The History of the Civil War in Tajikistan*** (Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2020), 336 pp., US \$ 119.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-6446-9287-5.

This is the author’s well-informed personal account, based on his extensive research visits to the country, of the evolution of the conflict between the radical Muslim Tajiks against the Soviet Tajiks, which ended in the establishment of an independent Tajik state in 1997. The author, a prominent scholar in the fields of Central Asian and Iranian studies is a professor of history at the University of Minnesota.

*Table of Contents:* The War Year; The Emirate of Bukhara; The Sovietization of Tajikistan; End of an Era; The Government of National Reconciliation; Reinventing the Wheel; The Path to Recovery; Appendix; Glossary; List of Abbreviations.

**Noah Feldman, *The Arab Winter: A Tragedy*** (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020), 216 pp., US \$ 22.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-6911-9429-9.

This is an assessment of the Arab Spring, which the author argues represented the first time in recent Middle Eastern history that many of the region’s people undertook collective action to achieve political and social reforms in their societies. To examine these issues, uprisings and their consequences include the Egyptian revolution, the Syrian civil war, the Islamic States in Iraq and Syria and the Tunisian struggle toward what the author terms a struggle toward Islamic constitutionalism are presented. The author is Felix Frankfurter Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA.

*Table of Contents:* Preface; The People Want; Tahrir and the Problem of Agency; Syria and the Question of Fault; The Islamic State as Utopia; Tunisia and Political Responsibility; Afterword: Catharsis?

**Joel Hodge, *Violence in the Name of God: The Militant Jihadist Response to Modernity*** (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 296 pp., US \$ 80.50 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-3501-0497-6.

This account utilizes René Girard’s mimetic theory of religiously sanctioned violence, to explain the historical

trajectory of militant jihadism as a violent response against the impact of modernity on their societies. The author is a Senior Lecturer in Systematic Theology at Australian Catholic University.

*Table of Contents:* Introduction: Why Another Book on Jihadism?; *Part I:* René Girard's Mimetic Theory; Violence in Modernity; *Part II:* The Islamic Modernity; The Militant Jihadist Response to Modernity; The Rise of Violent Jihad; Jihadism and Violence; Violence and Identity; Sacred Jihadist Totalitarianism; *Part III:* Why Is God Part of Human Violence? The Idolatrous Nature of Militant Jihadism; The Sacred and the Holy: Alternatives to Escalating Violence; Appendix: René Girard at a Glance.

**Samuel M. Katz, *No Shadows in the Desert: Murder, Vengeance, and Espionage in the War Against ISIS*** (New York, NY: Hanover Square Press, 2020), 368 pp., US \$ 28.99 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-3350-1383-5.

This is a dramatic insider's account of the behind-the-scenes battle by the Jordanian General Intelligence Department (GID) against ISIS, which had held a Royal Jordanian Royal Air Force's pilot hostage after his F-16 fighter aircraft crashed over ISIS territory in Syria on January 3, 2015. The pilot, First Lieutenant Moaz al-Kasasbeh, was ultimately executed in a highly publicized and brutal execution. The author's account of Jordan's GID's revenge against the pilot's ISIS captors draws on his extensive contacts with the Jordanian government, which provided him the inside material to produce this fascinating book. The author is a New York City-based author of numerous books on terrorism and counterterrorism.

*Table of Contents:* Glossary; October 26, 2019; Author's Note; Prologue: Slider One-One; Book One: A New Storm Over the Horizon; What Could Go Wrong?; The Fall of Mosul; The Line in the Sand; Send in the Vipers; Book Two: The Human Bazaar; Held Captive; The Point of No Return; Barbaric; The Extortionists; Shock and Horror; Kill the Monsters; Book Three: Guillotine; Amman Station; The Kill List; Tradecraft; The Third World War; Say, Die in Your Rage; Book Four: Payback; Desert One; Just Rewards; Find, Fix and Finish; Dirty Battles, A Dirty War; Dawn before Daylight; Postscript: Caution and Vigilance.

**Jacob Zenn, *Unmasking Boko Haram: Exploring Global Jihad in Nigeria*** (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2020), 415 pp., US \$ 47.50 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-6263-7878-0.

This is a comprehensive, detailed and authoritative account of the origins and current activities of Boko Haram, including its relationship with the Islamic State. To examine these issues, the author draws on his extensive interviews and access to primary sources in Arabic and Hausa. The author is Senior Fellow on African Affairs at The Jamestown Foundation and Adjunct Professor in Georgetown University's Security Studies Program.

*Table of Contents:* Boko Haram and Global Jihad; Nigerian Jihadists in Sudan and the Sahel.; Al-Qaeda in Nigeria; Ideological Preparation for Jihad; Broken Alliances with Salafis; Mobilizing for Battle; The Role of al-Qaeda Affiliates; Factional Feuds and Territorial; Conquests; Allegiance to the Islamic State; The Islamic State in West Africa Province; The Future of Global Jihad in Nigeria; Appendixes.

## **United States**

**Matthew Dallek, *Defenseless Under the Night: The Roosevelt Years and the Origins of Homeland Security*** (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016), 360 pp., US \$ 24.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-1997-4312-4.

This is an interesting account of the origins of modern homeland security in the United States, which began with the establishment by President Franklin Roosevelt of the Office of Civilian Defense (OCD) in the early 1930s.

During World War II, the OCD managed the recruitment and activities of more than 10 million volunteers for civilian defense. Also examined are issues such as civil liberties and the militarization of civilian life – issues that are still relevant in the activities of today’s Department of Homeland Security. The author is Professor of Political Management at George Washington University.

*Table of Contents:* Introduction: Guns and Butter; Ultimate Armageddon; No Pact, Treaty, Symbol, or Person; Two Fronts; The Problem of Home Defense; An American Plan; London Burning; A Sweeping Conflagration of Insanity; Heart and Soul; We Can’t All Run to Central Pk; A Man Must Be Protected; Fair Game; The Liberal Approach; All These Rights Spell Security; Conclusion: National Security Liberalism.

**Dennis A. Pluchinsky, *Anti-American Terrorism: From Eisenhower to Trump – A Chronicle of the Threat and Response; Volume I: The Eisenhower through Carter Administrations*** (Hackensack, NJ: World Scientific Publishing Ltd., 2020), 720 pp., US \$ 58.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-7832-6872-6.

This is the first volume of the author’s comprehensive and extensively detailed four volume overview of the origins and evolution of the United States’ Government’s approach to counterterrorism from the Dwight Eisenhower through the Donald Trump administrations. This first volume covers the years from the Eisenhower to the Carter presidencies - what the author terms the first phase of the international terrorist threat facing the United States. The second volume, covering the Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations, is scheduled to be published in a few months. The author is a retired U.S. Government terrorism analyst in the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security Threat Analysis Group/Division, giving this volume a unique insider’s perspective.

*Table of Contents:* Introduction to Volume I; Chapter 1: The Prologue: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson Administrations; Chapter 2: The Nixon and Ford Administrations (1969–1976) — The Overseas Threat; Chapter 3: The Nixon and Ford Administrations (1969–1976) — The Internal Threat; Chapter 4: The Nixon and Ford Administrations (1969–1976): The Response — The Overseas Threat; Chapter 5: The Nixon and Ford Administrations; (1969–1976): The Response — The Internal Threat; Chapter 6: The Nixon and Ford Administrations (1969–1976): The Ford Administration; Chapter 7: The Carter Administration (1977–1980) — The Overseas Threat; Chapter 8: The Carter Administration (1977–1980) — The Internal Threat; Chapter 9: The Carter Administration (1977–1980): The Response — Part I; Chapter 10: The Carter Administration (1977–1980): The Response — Part II; Chapter 11: The Carter Administration (1977–1980): The Response — Part III; Chapter 12: Summation and Prognosis; Appendix.

**Jason Ralph, *America’s War on Terror: The State of the 9/11 Exception from Bush to Obama*** (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 200 pp., US \$ 100 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-1996-5235-8.

This is a critical account of the effectiveness of the components of targeting, prosecution, detention as well as interrogation of suspected terrorists in the United States’ counter-terrorism efforts against mostly Islamist terrorists, including a discussion on adherence to customary international law and treaty law, during the administrations of George W. Bush and Barack Obama. The author is Professor of International Relations at the University of Leeds, England.

*Table of Contents:* Introduction; The use of force after 9/11; Prosecuting terrorist suspects after 9/11; Detaining terrorist suspects after 9/11; Interrogating terrorist suspects after 9/11; The State of the American Exception.

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**Scott Shane, *Objective Troy: A Terrorist, a President, and the Rise of the Drone*** (New York, NY: Tim Duggan Books, 2016), 416 pp., US \$ 28.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 17.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-8041-4031-7.

This is a dramatic journalistic account of the increasing use of weaponized drones by the American government, particularly under President Barack Obama, to target the leaders of Islamist terrorist groups, such as al-Qaida. The pursuit, targeting and assassination by a weaponized drone of Anwar al-Awlaki (and his associates) in their hideout in Yemen in May 2011 forms the book's central narrative. The author is a Washington, DC-based national security reporter for The New York Times.

*Table of Contents:* Prologue; Part I: 2009-2010; Merry Christmas; You Are Still Unsafe; Part II: 1990-2002; He Had a Beautiful Tongue; An Exquisite Weapon; We Are the Bridge; Totally Planning to Stay; Stealthy, Agile, and Lethal; Part III: 2002-2009; What Was the Transformation; WWW Jihad; I Face the World as It Is; Part IV: 2010-2014; The Guy Everyone Wanted to Find; The Time for Reaping; A Bigger Brand; Afterword.

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