

Abstract

Title of Thesis: Cubs of the Caliphate: The Indoctrination of Child Soldiers and the Perpetuation of the Islamic State

Cheryl Gordon, Bachelor of Arts, 2018

Thesis directed by: Assistant Professor Scott Tyson

In 2014, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) abducted over 150 schoolboys in Syria and forced them to take lessons in violent extremist ideology. Since then, ISIS' recruitment of child soldiers has accelerated and expanded. Children are not optimal recruits for armed groups since they are weaker, smaller, less disciplined, and not militarily trained. Why have ISIS leaders decided to recruit children, who are less operationally effective fighters? I argue that the group's primary concern is permanent existence; therefore breeding a new generation of loyal and lasting Islamic State fighters is more appealing to the leadership than immediate success on the battlefield with operationally effective adult combatants. My findings reveal that ISIS favors youth conscripts because children are more susceptible to ideological indoctrination. By recruiting young children who are "blank slates," with beliefs and values yet to be formed, ISIS capitalizes on youngsters' inherent vulnerability to influence. This study relies on the first-hand accounts of former child combatants, insurgent group leaders, government officials, and civilian witnesses to investigate ISIS' practice of child soldiering and analyze the realities and implications of this phenomenon.

Cubs of the Caliphate:
The Indoctrination of Child Soldiers and the Perpetuation of the Islamic State

By

Cheryl Gordon

Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Literature, Science, and the Arts
at the University of Michigan in partial fulfillment
for the requirements for the degree
of Bachelor of Arts
(International Studies with Honors)
2018

Thesis Committee:

Professor Scott Tyson
Doctor Anthony Marcum

Dedication

To my mother, for your unconditional love and devotion.

To my father, for your support and encouragement.

To my sister, for inspiring me each and every day.

To my grandparents, for your cherished wisdom.

And to all the child soldiers... This is for you.

Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank Scott Tyson for being an unbelievable advisor throughout the year. I appreciate the time you have taken, as well as the wit and expertise you have brought to this process. In addition, a huge thank you to Dr. Anthony Marcum, for your incredible support and feedback—you have made me a better writer and thinker. I am grateful to my mother, Laura Wolff, for helping me talk through ideas and giving me stylistic advice. I would also like to express my gratitude to the International Studies 2018 Honors Cohort for their useful insights and critiques throughout the peer editing process. Lastly, many thanks to the International Center of Photography and the University of Michigan Library for providing me with invaluable primary source material and other resources.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Chapter One: Child Soldiers and Operational Effectiveness	1
I. Introduction	1
II. Methodology	4
III. Terminology	5
IV. Literature Review	8
V. Conclusion	17
Chapter Two: Conventional Uses of Children in War	18
I. Introduction	18
II. Methods of Recruitment	19
III. Roles	25
IV. Conclusion	31
Chapter Three: The Indoctrinated Child Soldier	32
I. Introduction	32
II. Importance of Ideological Indoctrination in Warfare	32
III. The Child Soldiers of Boko Haram	34
IV. The Child Soldiers of Nazi Germany	35
V. Hitler Youth and the Cubs of the Caliphate	37
VI. The Indoctrinated Child Soldiers of the Islamic State	41
VII. Conclusion	45
Chapter Four: The Final Battle	46
I. Introduction	46
II. The United States' Approach to Fighting ISIS, 2017-2018	47
III. The United States' Approach to Addressing Child Soldiering in Iraq and Syria	50
IV. ISIS' Preparation for Dabiq and its Aftermath	52
V. Conclusion	58
Chapter Five: Hearts and Minds	58
I. Introduction	59
II. Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) for Conventional Conflicts	59
III. Demobilizing Cubs	62
IV. De-radicalizing Cubs	64
V. Reintegrating Cubs	66
VI. Conclusion	69
References	71

Chapter One: Child Soldiers and Operational Effectiveness

I. Introduction

The Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, commonly known as ISIS, ISIL or *Daesh*, is a fundamental jihadi group with the stated goal of establishing a caliphate state governed by Sharia law. ISIS was established in 2004 out of al-Qaeda in Iraq, under the leadership of the Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (Council on Foreign Relations 2015). ISIS first garnered significant international attention in 2014 when the group successfully captured large areas in Iraq and Syria (Ibid). Between 2014 and 2018, an estimated 40,000 individuals from 120 countries flocked to Syria and Iraq to fight for ISIS (Schmitt 2018). In 2015, the Global Terrorism Index named ISIS the deadliest terrorist group, having killed 6,141 people (Institute for Economics and Peace 2016, 16). In that year, ISIS-affiliated groups carried out attacks in 28 countries (Ibid, 4). The entire global community is affected by ISIS' activities, and threatened by the danger the group poses. ISIS has been distinguished from other terrorist organizations by its brutality, reflected in viral media campaigns depicting ruthless beheadings, executions, and torture. Increasingly, children are featured in these videos, often as perpetrators of violence themselves.

ISIS' use of child soldiers is a hallmark of the organization. Whether on the battlefield or on the Internet, ISIS' young combatants horrify audiences near and far, sending a chilling message that a new generation of violent extremists have arrived. To understand child soldiering in any context, one must consider how the benefits of this practice outweigh the costs of the operational effectiveness gap. An operational effectiveness gap means that since children are weaker, smaller, less disciplined, and not trained militarily, the group has to spend extra time and effort transforming children into soldiers, instead of recruiting adult combatants who are likely to

be stronger, larger, more disciplined, and therefore more ready to fight effectively right away. Nevertheless, several armed groups choose to use child soldiers. What motivates this choice to use operationally ineffective combatants? Why has ISIS in particular decided to recruit child soldiers? A number of scholars writing about child soldiering believe that armed groups recruit children as cannon fodder, or to make up for not having enough adult fighters (Beber and Blattman 2013; Tynes and Early 2014; Singer 2005). This paper will argue that ISIS is primarily recruiting child soldiers to build the next generation of jihadi fighters, for which it needs impressionable and malleable youth. Young children have not yet been fully formed in their personal views and values, rendering them vulnerable to blindly accepting the ideology ISIS bestows upon them. In recruiting child soldiers, ISIS is able to effectively intervene during a child's formative years and indoctrinate him or her with the group's violent extremist ideology.

Most researchers and policymakers believe that ISIS' use of children does not follow trends of other conflicts (McLaughlin 2016). ISIS recruits, uses, and envisions child soldiering differently from other armed groups that have been studied. John Horgan, a terrorism expert, says: "Most terror groups find it difficult to rationalize or explain child recruitment... The Islamic State is one of the few groups that is very proud to announce to the world, not only are they doing it, but it's also the future" (Cousins 2014). Other armed groups do not use children as propaganda, spend time and resources investing into them, or boast about their usage to the extent that ISIS does.

Based on statements from ISIS leaders, the organization's goals are to gain, control, and retain territory in the immediate term, and in the long term, to establish a caliphate and a permanent presence (ash-Shāmī 2013). A popular ISIS slogan, "*baqiyya wa tatamaddad,*" translates to "remaining and expanding" (Al-Tamini 2014). As any rational organization would,

ISIS is investing now to promote its long-term interest. ISIS is not using child soldiers because it is constrained and has no other choice. Rather, it is a tactical investment strategy. As a relatively weak group compared to the countries allied against it, ISIS is making every effort to guarantee that even if its current leadership and fighters are defeated, killed or imprisoned, the group will not die out. A new generation will live to fight another day. Indoctrinating and training youth makes it more likely that the next generation will rise up against any conquerors. These young people will be carrying the ISIS message and will be primed to wage jihad all over again.

As ISIS continues to broadcast propaganda depicting its use of young combatants, the international community is increasingly recognizing that ISIS' practice of child soldiering is a significant problem. There has not been much talk, however, about solutions or strategies to help these children escape captivity, rehabilitate, or reintegrate back into society. ISIS' use of child soldiers is part of what makes the group so dangerous, and part of its strategy to remain that way. Therefore, foreign governments, the United Nations, and other international organizations concerned with global security should view preventing the use of child soldiers as central to maintaining peace and combatting the spread of terror. In this thesis, I examine ISIS' use of child fighters to add to the academic and policymaking conversation about the need for additional international standards and programs specifically designed to help the global community fight ISIS, while also intervening to save the lives and futures of young children. I begin this first chapter by explaining the methodology and terms used throughout the thesis. I then consider motivations for using child soldiers, and why some rebel leaders view children as attractive recruits. Assuming that these leaders' primary motivation is to win battles, I explore how the presence of children could possibly contribute to success on the battlefield.

II. Methodology

This study examines ISIS from 2014 to 2018, the four-year period during which ISIS rose to power, captured large swaths of territory, declared the creation of the Caliphate, began recruiting child soldiers, grew in size and global reach, and lost much of the territory it had gained. The evidence in this study consists of first-hand accounts from former child soldiers as well as rebel leaders, state officials, journalistic reports, ISIS propaganda, and other primary sources that shed light on factors that are crucial in understanding why ISIS recruits children. Secondary sources such as publications from scholarly journals, think tanks, and human rights organizations are used to interpret this information and data in new ways, and offer alternate viewpoints. To analyze how ISIS' engagement of child soldiers is unique, I compare it with three analogous historical examples of child soldiering and identify key differences. Boko Haram and al-Qaeda are similar to ISIS in that both groups recruit child fighters, have the goal of implementing Sharia law, and use strategies such as suicide bombing soft targets. Moreover, as noted, ISIS emerged from al-Qaeda in Iraq. Nazi Germany is the most well known historical example of youth recruitment and indoctrination, and Adolf Hitler and al-Baghdadi outlined similar visions for the next generation.

The qualitative evidence discussed here is an important addition to much of the existing scholarly work on the topic of child combatants, which relies heavily on quantitative research (Beber and Blattman 2013; Tynes and Early 2014; Haer and Böhmelt 2015; Bloom, Horgan, and Winter 2016). Quantitative research is not appropriate for my case because quantitative data lacks sufficient detail and nuance, which is necessary in studying the personal experiences of child soldiers. A central focus of this research is on the process of ideological indoctrination, which has complex, underlying psychosocial dynamics. Qualitative research uses data that

reports on the context of situations, perceptions, and behaviors, which are valuable for delving deeply into how this process of indoctrination works. The direct statements analyzed in this thesis are based on human experiences and reveal subtleties about child soldiering that quantitative research cannot fully convey.

III. Terminology

This thesis uses several terms that require explanation: *Cubs of the Caliphate*, *ideology*, *terrorism*, *violent extremism*, and *indoctrination*. These concepts are frequently referred to throughout the paper, and this section is intended to clarify what they mean.

Cubs of the Caliphate

ISIS' mission is to establish a *caliphate*, which is the idea of a state dictated by Islamic law (*Sharī'ah*). The Caliphate is to be led by a *caliph*, an all-knowing and powerful individual said to embody God in human form (Kennedy 2016). ISIS seeks to revive the Caliphate as part of its political vision for all Muslims to unify and live according to the will of Allah (Ibid). For this aspiration to become a reality, future generations must become and remain committed to the concept of the Caliphate. ISIS leaders refer to their child soldiers as "Cubs," an ironically endearing nickname coined in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War, when Saddam Hussein sought to consolidate his power with the help of child warriors (Benotman and Malik 2016, 25). Saddam's Lion Cubs, or *Ashbal Saddam*, recruited boys as young as ten years old to undergo ideological indoctrination and military training. American troops first encountered these child fighters during the 2003 United States invasion of Iraq. Based on observations recorded by the U.S. military at that time, scholars have recently asserted that Saddam Hussein's legacy and the

Ba'athist influence are evident throughout the administrative and bureaucratic constructions of the Islamic State (Ibid, 26).

Ideology

Ideology is a key element of ISIS' identity and why it uses child soldiers. This study refers to political ideology in particular, which can be defined as a set of beliefs, principles, priorities, and discourses that guide decision-making, legitimate the authority, and assist in the creation of governing culture and practice (Brandenberger 2011, 6). Ideology defines political objectives and worldviews, and can also act as a force for achieving these objectives (Ibid).

ISIS is a militant Sunni group. To properly understand ISIS' ideology, one must look at how ISIS leaders themselves describe the group's mission: "If one wants to get to know the program of the [Islamic] State, its politics, and its legal opinions, one ought to consult its leaders, its statements, its public addresses, its own sources" (al-'Adnānī 2012). In a 2013 speech, Islamic State spokesman Shaykh Abū Muhammad al-'Adnānī ash-Shāmī proclaimed two objectives: The first was to build a civil democratic state governed by Sharia law, and the second was to create a local, nationalist Islamic state. In ash-Shāmī's view, this state, through the financial and political support of other governments in the Gulf, would be internationally recognized and legitimate enough to gain a seat in the United Nations Security Council (ash-Shāmī 2013, 10). Ash-Shāmī emphasized the implementation of strict Sharia law and made it clear that to reach the ultimate goal of building an Islamic State, non-believers must be eliminated. The elimination of non-believers is to be accomplished through *jihad*, another term used in this paper. Military action is only one means of waging jihad, and it is not a commonly accepted practice (Kabbani and Hendricks n.d.). In a religious sense, jihad can be defined as the effort to educate people about

Islam (Ibid). Ash-Shāmī made it explicitly clear in a 2014 speech that ISIS does not wage religious jihad, as he instructed followers to kill disbelievers, and to do so in any manner possible (ash-Shāmī 2014, 11). Since ISIS does not adhere to the religious sense of the word, and Islam is a religion, the widely debated term “radical Islam” is not used in this paper to describe ISIS’ ideology. “Radical Islam” is a controversial point challenged by most mainstream Muslims and scholars of Islam because it supposes that there is an inherent connection between Islam and violence (Abdelkader 2016). The discussion of this term, however, is not the subject of this study. The focus is on the way ISIS defines and presents itself, in order to understand its motivations for recruiting child soldiers.

Terrorism

For the purposes of this paper, terrorism is defined as the use of violence against civilians by non-state actors to achieve political goals (Kydd and Walter 2006, 52). While ISIS commits acts that align with this definition, the group cannot be accurately described only in those terms. As discussed above, it is a movement motivated by an ideology: the uniting and rousing belief that the West is hostile to Islam, and that every Muslim has an obligation to join the Caliphate (Stengel 2017).

Violent Extremism

Violent extremism is the term that better defines ISIS because it acknowledges the important role of ideology. Violent extremists are described as, “individuals who support or commit ideologically-motivated violence to further political goals” (White House 2011).

Indoctrination

This term describes a persuasive process by which ideology is instilled in a subject's mind through propaganda and popular political culture (Brandenberger 2011, 7). Indoctrination is different from education in that it is not an active process of engagement by the learner with the subject matter open to questioning, discussion, or debate. Rather, indoctrination is a one-way process of passive receipt of the ideology of the leader(s), and is resistant to negative or contrary evidence. An indoctrinated individual has been stripped of his or her autonomy, since he or she is unable to question the indoctrinated idea or formulate his or her own understanding based on examination and critical analysis (Siegel 1988, 80).

IV. Literature Review

Why Groups Recruit Child Soldiers

The phenomenon of child soldiering exists around the world, with fifty-six non-state armed groups and fifty states employing this strategy. The estimated number of current child soldiers globally ranges from tens to hundreds of thousands (Child Soldiers International 2017). ISIS has been distinguished by the United Nations and the United States Department of State for amassing high numbers of child combatants, who seem to be a key part of ISIS' strategy (United Nations General Assembly Security Council 2016, 2; Trafficking in Persons Report 2017, 213, 380). A 2016 report on children in the Islamic State suggests that ISIS is mobilizing children and youth at an increasing rate. With military pressure mounting against ISIS, scholars expect that this upwards trajectory will continue (Bloom, Winter, and Horgan 2016). The literature on child soldiers is divided on whether their presence is advantageous or detrimental to a group's

battlefield operations. To evaluate their utility, it is necessary to first define what constitutes battlefield effectiveness.

Battlefield Effectiveness

Scholars differ in how they define battlefield effectiveness. Many authors have avoided a direct definition and instead focus on important contributing elements such as strong leadership, unit cohesion, resources, and loyalty (Gabriel and Savage 1978; Kirkland 2003; Millett, Murray, and Watman 1986; Wheeler 1986). Most scholars agree that battlefield effectiveness involves both individual and group components. At the individual level, I define battlefield effectiveness as the ability of a single soldier to use arms effectively, be skilled in combat, and have a high level of discipline. Gabriel and Savage (1978) also consider battlefield effectiveness at the individual level, but emphasize the leader instead of the fighter. They argue that combat effectiveness first and foremost requires good and coherent leadership. While a competent leader can be key to success, Gabriel and Savage do not acknowledge that soldiers can still be ineffective combatants with a competent leader.

Faris R. Kirkland focuses on the group component of battlefield effectiveness; he argues that unit cohesion is crucial for victory on the battlefield (Kirkland 2003, 159). He asserts that unit cohesion will only develop in a climate of integrity, trust, and respect. Group dynamics are important to consider, but Kirkland does not acknowledge that a group could fight cohesively and still be made up of incapable individuals, rendering the unit ineffective during battle. Additionally, as we have seen in case studies of groups who use child soldiers, children can be effectively motivated to fight brutally without the slightest bit of integrity, trust, or respect being present.

Millett, Murray, and Watman (1986) argue that military effectiveness is the process by which armed forces convert resources into fighting power. They claim that a fully effective military is one that derives maximum combat power from the resources available. This definition is incomplete because if two armies have the same resource allocation, the one that is made up of better-trained combatants is more likely to win. Wheeler (1986) asserts that loyalty is what makes a good soldier, and for that loyalty to be effective, it must be inspired by trust and not fear. This definition is flawed because for many children, fear breeds obedience (Singer 2005, 71). Moreover, a soldier of any age could be loyal to his or her commander, but that commander could be incompetent, or the fighters could be unskilled. Good leadership, unit cohesion, resources, and loyalty all contribute to operational effectiveness and the likelihood of success, but none are effective without the presence of a strong and capable combatant.

Motivations for Recruiting Child Soldiers

In examining the motivations for recruiting child soldiers, one must look at how children contribute to battlefield effectiveness at both the individual and group levels. In addition, one must consider the external factors and circumstances under which child recruitment appears to be a rational strategy for advancing an armed group's goals.

Cheap and Sustainable Resource

A number of authors argue that a key reason children are recruited as soldiers is that they constitute a cheap, plentiful, and renewable resource. Singer (2005) argues that demographics is an explanatory variable for the use of child combatants: where populations are disproportionately young, children become easy and cheap to procure. This argument would apply in the case of

ISIS because Iraq, the country where many of ISIS' child fighters originate, is one of the most youthful countries in the world—nearly half of its population is under the age of nineteen (UNDP n.d.). Singer additionally argues that child soldiers are drawn from populations that are undereducated, malnourished, marginalized and disaffected. He reasons that globalization, war, and disease have created a pool of potential recruits that rebel groups can draw from. While these factors may well play a role in the decision to recruit youth, they are insufficient given that not all strained groups press children into military service. For example, Faulkner finds Singer's explanations unconvincing in explaining the case of rebel groups in Uganda: the National Resistance Army operated in the same state and decade as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), but did not partake in the recruitment of child soldiers (Faulkner 2016, 214).

Although children constitute a plentiful resource, the notion that they are cheap to retain is problematic. While children require less food than adults, the money that a rebel group could save on food pales in comparison to what it would spend on establishing training camps or programs specifically designed for children. Beber and Blattman (2013) reason that children take longer to train because they are not as fit for combat; the long-term LRA recruits and commanders whom they interviewed cited this point in explaining the disadvantage of recruiting children. Groups like ISIS, al-Qaeda, and the Taliban have had to establish special training camps designed specifically for training children. These groups pay parents to send their children to radical schools, which can add up to a significant sum if many children are being recruited—which is indeed the case. Since children will not be able to effectively use conventional, large, clunky arms, groups will have to seek out and purchase modern lightweight arms instead of using the guns already in their possession that adult soldiers use with ease.

Bad Alternatives

One way to understand why some groups do and some groups do not recruit child soldiers is to look at the options available to them. Many scholars regard bad alternatives to be a major reason for why an armed group would recruit child combatants. Child soldiering may not be the best tactic to adopt given that a child would require more training, but it could be the best obtainable option for a group with depleted resources. In this vein, Beber and Blattman claim that the forced recruitment of children is a rational and optimal strategy for groups who are poor in the sense of having bad alternatives (Beber and Blattman 2013, 101). Times of crisis can make disputants desperate. Tynes and Early reason that this desperation, often caused by scarce economic resources or lack of local support, could result in the decision to recruit child soldiers (Tynes and Early 2014, 81). Tynes and Early, as well as Singer, argue that child fighters are a solution in situations when there are not enough available adults to become soldiers. Children can alleviate troop shortages by filling up the ranks, compensating for a lack of adult combatants. As long as rebel leaders are constrained in the ways discussed above, there will be an incentive to recruit children for insurgency and terror.

Having limited options may be a motivating factor in leading groups to consider conscripting child soldiers, but the existing literature does not fully address why exactly groups choose child soldiering over other available alternatives, such as recruiting foreign fighters or generating additional revenues through black market activity. Today, mercenaries are fighting for rebel groups in Yemen's civil war (Hager and Mazzetti 2015), and they are also present in Syria, sent by Russia to train jihadis (Komar, Borys, and Woods 2017). Some groups have increased their black market activity to alleviate resource deficiencies. For example, the LRA turned to bartering tusks when stealing from civilians did not secure enough resources to provide

food, uniforms, and ammunition (Cakaj 2015). To truly comprehend why groups recruit child combatants, we must understand how child soldiering relieves constraints in ways that the alternatives do not. Since many constrained armed groups do not recruit child soldiers, we know that child soldiering is not the only solution. The literature does not answer or even acknowledge this fundamental question: What does child soldiering achieve that other available options do not?

Ease of Manipulation

Developmental psychology tells us that children's social and brain development lead them to be more conformist and easily influenced. Adolescents are more prone to bending under social pressure, a psychological trait that rebel groups take advantage of when recruiting them. Beber and Blattman argue that since children are more malleable, obedient, and easily persuaded, they are appealing to rebel groups that desire to obtain recruits quickly and without resistance (Beber and Blattman 2013, 69). Their study of the LRA reveals that children are easier than adults to mislead and indoctrinate, cheaper to retain, and more responsive to coercive methods (Ibid, 68). Faulkner concurs, saying that Beber and Blattman's argument is the most compelling one to date regarding the recruitment of child soldiers (Faulkner 2016, 215). Tynes and Early also find this argument to be convincing, stating that children have a heightened vulnerability to coercion, which makes them easier to recruit and retain. They cite guerilla leaders in Sri Lanka, who explain that they recruited children because they are easily conditioned and motivated (Tynes and Early 2014, 83). In addition, children's vulnerability to manipulation increases their willingness to follow orders completely, and carry out brutal acts that adults might hesitate to.

How Child Soldiers Enhance Battlefield Effectiveness

As discussed, battlefield effectiveness requires a cohesive unit made up of individuals who are skilled in combat, including the ability to use arms effectively, and have a high level of personal discipline and group loyalty. It is unlikely that one would describe a child in these terms, but some scholars do see children as possessing some of these qualities. While children generally have less physical strength than adults, the availability of cheap, small arms has undoubtedly increased the ability of child soldiers to kill. Scholars disagree, however, on how much of a difference these weapons make to a child's fighting capacity. Singer contends that, "efficiency improvements in small arms permit these recruits to be effective participants in warfare." He claims that these new "toys for tots" are easy to procure, only require a few hours of training, and are easy for children to use and carry (Singer 2005, 46). Other scholars dispute that this training process is as simple and quick as Singer makes it out to be. Beber and Blattman note that even though the arms might be smaller, the children are still smaller themselves and will have difficulty handling recoil and shooting accurately (Beber and Blattman 2013, 67). Haer and Böhmelt argue that it is not so easy to be effective with a gun, regardless of its size. The group will still have to invest significant time and money into training a child soldier, since children are likely to know much less than adults about military tactics (Haer and Böhmelt 2015, 158).

Singer argues that children can utilize small arms with minimal training, but he does not provide sufficient evidence to back up this assumption. Moreover, simply having a gun and being able to shoot it does not constitute a battle-effective soldier. A significant weakness in his work is that he provides no criteria to define effectiveness, and does not consider important elements of effective soldiering such as trigger discipline, target identification, and the ability to

fight in different terrains. This lack of conceptualization and detail makes it difficult to analyze his evidence. Moreover, his evidence is lacking, as Singer does not provide an explanation of how he selected his cases, meaning that selection bias could have led to a focus on cases that fit his (implicit) definition of battlefield effectiveness.

Tynes and Early maintain that children are effective fighters because they can quickly be trained and motivated to fight brutally, constituting a tactical “innovation” on the part of rebel groups (Tynes and Early 2014, 81). In their global analysis of 198 internal armed conflicts, the authors provide examples of rebel groups whose use of child soldiers seemingly provided them with a strategic advantage over their enemies. Although they have a robust sample of conflicts and discuss the factors that lead to child recruitment, they fail to provide a critical analysis of the “coercive methods” they frequently refer to. In addition, they do not go into depth on *how* child soldiers are used once they are recruited, only briefly touching on logistical support roles.

In contrast to Singer and Tynes and Early, Haer and Böhmelt, Beber and Blattman, and Bloom, Horgan, and Winter hold that children are not effective militarily. Haer and Böhmelt define military effectiveness as the ability of a rebel group to use its forces to destroy the government’s military while preserving its own troops (Haer and Böhmelt 2015, 159). They argue that access to arms and resources is the most important determinant of a group’s fighting capacity (Ibid, 153). They reason that since children know much less than adults about combat tactics, child soldiers must be less effective militarily. All this being said, Haer and Böhmelt do note that children do not have to be effective in combat to increase a group’s overall effectiveness, since they can provide valuable assistance with the daily operations of the group in other roles. A considerable shortcoming of Haer and Böhmelt’s analysis (which they acknowledge) is that the observed positive correlation between child soldier use and rebel

groups' fighting capacities does not take into account the impact of costs associated with training child soldiers, which can take much longer than training adults (Ibid, 168). Beber and Blattman also found that children were considered less dependable fighters by their commanders, and had to wait around ten months before they were given a gun. While Bloom, Horgan, and Winter agree that children are ineffective on the battlefield, they note that some groups effectively use children as a propaganda tool of shock and horror. ISIS purposefully publicizes its use of child soldiers to "project strength, pierce defenses, and strike fear into enemy soldiers' hearts" (Bloom, Horgan, and Winter 2016, 31). The researchers hypothesize that as military pressure increases against ISIS, child combatants will become more tactically attractive because they represent an effective form of psychological warfare.

Despite the differences among them, the authors cited above share a common focus on the value of child soldiers to a group's success on the battlefield. Yet, this focus obscures the broader goals and strategic considerations that motivate some groups, and ISIS in particular, to conscript children into military service. While ISIS may be able to commit vicious and brutal acts against innocent people, victory in modern warfare requires more than inflicting casualties. An armed group will not be able to conquer and hold large territories unless it can be an effective fighting force. One can evaluate the claim that children are effective fighters by observing whether a group that deploys more children is more successful in winning battles and capturing territory—and much of the literature indicates that they are not as effective as adults in these ways. Nevertheless, it is evident that armed groups have incentives to use them in certain situations, and recruiting children into the military does have a powerful effect of indoctrinating and bringing them into the fold, which may prove critical to a group's long-term viability.

V. Conclusion

This chapter presented ISIS' practice of child soldiering as unique to other groups. I considered what factors may have motivated ISIS to engage this strategy, and argued that ISIS' intention behind child soldier recruitment is not that of a quick fix military remedy, but rather there exists a larger, long-term plan for the Cubs of the Caliphate.

The rest of the thesis goes as follows: I review in the second chapter conventional uses of children in war, analyzing how other armed groups have traditionally recruited and used children in order to then understand how ISIS' practice is distinct. The third chapter introduces what it would take for a child to be an operationally effective soldier, highlighting the importance of ideological indoctrination in the training process. It examines how ISIS is bucking conventional wisdom on child soldiering, and what is different about this group's approach to the recruitment, training, usage, and retention of child soldiers. The fourth chapter considers what future events ISIS could be preparing its child combatants for. It anticipates the United States shifting tactics and launching a large-scale invasion of Syria, and discusses how child fighters would change the nature of the war. The last chapter contemplates ways to move forward in facing new challenges posed by the Cubs of the Caliphate, who will become lethal lions in the near future. Promising de-radicalization efforts and policy implications will be identified and evaluated.

Chapter Two: Conventional Uses of Children in War

I. Introduction

The United Nations defines child soldiers as, “any person [of 18 years of age or under] who is, or who has been, recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity” (Paris Principles 2007). No matter what role a child occupies in war, they will be exposed to severe levels of violence, whether as witnesses, victims, or participants. This section discusses how armed insurgent groups traditionally recruit children, what roles these children are commonly assigned, and what their experiences are like. By first establishing the conventional uses of children in war, we can then better understand how ISIS bucks conventional wisdom on child soldiering with its distinct motivations and strategies. Since ISIS was not fully formed until 2014, its recruitment of children is a relatively new phenomenon. Therefore, to analyze the group’s modern approach I explore how other armed groups have used youth to their advantage in the past.

Seeking out former child combatants to listen to their stories is one of the most promising ways to understand the recruitment and usage of children in war, and move forward in addressing the harms caused by the use of child soldiers. Jimmie Briggs, an expert on child soldiering, reflects on his research: “I certainly didn’t find all the answers, but I know they lie within the stories and experiences of young people such as the unforgettable ones I met... and the thousands more like them who too often remain faceless, nameless” (Briggs 2005, 171).

I argue in this chapter that all forms of youth recruitment are coercive in nature, because even non-violent methods still include aspects of manipulation. I assert that a child who performs even the most trivial tasks for an armed group is still in danger, and use testimonies from former

child soldiers to demonstrate that any association with an armed group produces trauma and long-lasting harm.

II. Methods of Recruitment

“But how can a child volunteer? Because if I volunteer, maybe I don’t know what I am doing, but you, the grown-up, should know. And you should stop me from volunteering being a soldier. It wasn’t my choice. It wasn’t the choice I had to become a soldier.”

--C., child soldier from ages nine to fifteen (Singer 2005, 62).

Coercion

Armed groups typically use coercive methods to recruit children. Child soldier experts and international human rights bodies agree that child soldier enlistment can never be truly voluntary on the part of the child (International Labour Organization 2003; UNICEF 2007; International Committee of the Red Cross 2012; Amnesty International 2013; Human Rights Watch n.d; United Nations n.d.; Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative n.d.; Invisible Children n.d.). In issuing guidelines on this topic, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict holds that there is no distinction between voluntary and forced recruitment because even if children are joining “voluntarily,” it is a means of survival (Children and Armed Conflict Root Causes n.d.). P.W Singer concurs, cautioning that it is misleading to describe a child’s “decision” to join an armed group as voluntary because, “they are driven to do so by forces beyond their control,” namely hunger and poverty (Singer 2005, 62).

Although experts and scholars maintain that child soldier enrollment cannot be truly voluntary, there are perceptions among the general public that some children willingly align with

rebel groups. There are a number of accounts where children express these views: Khalid, a child soldier from Pakistan says: “It is obligatory on every Muslim to fight nonbelievers” (Brett and Specht 2004, 28). David from Northern Ireland claims he joined rebel forces “because I wanted to be fighting for the cause of the Protestant people” (Ibid). Children may sincerely identify with the ideological mission of a group and want to fight for it. A closer analysis of the recruitment and usage of child soldiers, however, raises questions about its genuine voluntary nature. Given the limited options children face due to poverty, violent abuse, brainwashing, isolation from their communities, and drug use, it is likely that all of these factors impact how youth see themselves, their roles, motivations and desires. These factors have pushed these children toward a decision and compelled them to fight.

Means of Survival

A UNICEF survey from 2003 found that almost 60 percent of child soldiers in East Asia chose to enlist due to poverty. Sarah Mathewson of the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers states what becomes obvious to vulnerable children in desperate situations: “With a gun you can eat” (UNICEF 2003). One Congolese child soldier attests to this: “I heard that the rebels at least were eating. So, I joined them” (Singer 2005, 63). Some children join armed groups out of a need for security (UNDDR 2006). A Sudanese boy said that he joined the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) because his mother was abducted and their cattle were taken, “...so I was left without any option rather than come to the SPLA for protection” (International Labour Organization February 2003). With limited options, children will do what is necessary to survive.

Recruiting vulnerable youth is easiest and most efficient when rebel groups know exactly where they are located. Child soldiers are frequently recruited from conflict zones or refugee

camps. Children in these areas are vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups because they have few opportunities, face many dangers, and need protectors. Christine from the Democratic Republic of Congo says: “It’s because of the war. When it’s the war, you don’t choose... Because if you have weapons, you can defend yourself, if you don’t have any, you are beaten, one kills you, and one rapes you, even the boys” (Brett and Specht 2004, 13). Moreover, children who grow up in conflict zones are more vulnerable because they are likely to be de-sensitized to violence, and therefore less apprehensive about committing violence themselves (Chatterjee 2012). Children are also susceptible for recruitment in the wake of a natural disaster or sudden outbreak of war when they are displaced in refugee camps. When populations are threatened and families are on the run, they will likely become disconnected, leaving children unaccompanied and defenseless (Singer 2005, 59). In Sudan, the government rounded up poor and refugee children who worked or lived on the streets and placed them into special closed camps. Acting as orphanages, these camps in effect were reservoirs for rebel group conscripts (Ibid). Supposedly safe havens, refugee and internally displaced person camps contain large groups of children that rebels can easily access.

Abduction

A number of armed groups abduct their child soldiers. Founded in 1987, the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) operates in Uganda, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Global Security 2016). The LRA is notorious for being comprised almost exclusively of children who are systematically abducted from schools, communities and homes. Children who attempt to escape, resist, cannot keep up, or fall ill are killed (Mermet and Jaffré 1999). In Rwanda, one survey reported that the Revolutionary United

Front (RUF) abducted 88 percent of its fighters (Eck 2014, 392). Although adults and children alike were abducted, the RUF's forcible youth conscription was unique for its brutality: once captured, "RUF" was carved into the skin of child recruits to deter escape (Ibid, 393). In Nigeria, Boko Haram abducts hundreds of women and girls across the country (Children and Armed Conflict May 2017). The most publicized case was in 2014, when Boko Haram kidnapped 276 Chibok schoolgirls (Searcey May 2017). The use of abduction can be effective in gathering new recruits because of its element of surprise. Nevertheless, this method can be costly in that communities and parents may become angry, fearful, and thus motivated to turn against the rebel group. Parents might be persuaded to enroll their children in radical jihadi schools or send them to fight for an army, but if their children are taken without consent, parents will not lend their support to the group. For this reason, groups may pursue other forcible tactics for attaining recruits.

Violence

Another common form of coercive recruitment is the threat or use of violence to intimidate a child into joining the rebel group. This type of strategic violence can often include the killing of family members. A seven-year-old boy from Liberia told a Radio Netherlands reporter: "The rebels told me to join them, but I said no. Then they killed my smaller brother. I changed my mind." (Singer 2005, 1). Rebel groups attempt to gain loyalty during recruitment by reducing the options of recruits, so that they have nowhere else to turn but to the group. The killing of family members diminishes the recruit's outside options, serves to intimidate, provoke him or her into fighting, and in effect begins the process of de-sensitization to violence. Thirteen-year-old Martin P., a former child soldier in the LRA recalls: "Early on when we were

captured... they tied up my two younger brothers... they beat them with sticks until the two of them died. They told us it would give us strength to fight.” (Human Rights Watch July 2003).

Rebel groups can achieve compliance by forcing children to kill their own family members. When a child is forced to murder a loved one, guilt and fear are fostered. These sentiments can act as a deterrent from attempting escape (Ibid). One scholar explains: “Such extreme uses of violent coercion remove the need for the rebel group to police the conscripts to prevent attrition since the group has effectively shut off exit options, given that individuals believe a group’s threat to be credible” (Eck 2014, 382). The goal of these killings is to establish the credibility of the group’s threat, which is largely effective when a child is forced to watch a relative be brutally slaughtered, knowing that she or he will suffer a similar punishment for failing to cooperate with the rebels. These killings can also serve as a means of psychological tethering, where children kill their families and so the rebels become their new family.

Drugs

Some groups use drugs to coerce children into fighting. Certain drugs can be particularly effective in making a child both more violent and de-sensitized to that violence. Drugs can be cheap, and bring about high compliance (Eck 2014, 382). In Sierra Leone, the RUF frequently gave new child soldiers drugs during recruitment. Lynette, a sixteen-year-old captured by the RUF describes: “From the first day they drugged us. They showed me some powder and said it was cocaine and was called brown-brown. I saw them put it in the food and after eating I felt dizzy. I felt crazy.” Lynette continues, describing another scene: “One day I saw a group of rebels bring out about 20 boy abductees... they had them lined up under gunpoint and one by one called them forward to be injected in their arms with a needle. The boys begged them not to

use needles but the rebels said it would give them power... About 20 minutes later the boys started screaming like they were crazy and some of them even passed out. Two of the rebels instructed the boys to scream, 'I want kill, I want kill' and gave a few of them kerosene to take with them on one of their burn house raids" (Human Rights Watch 2008). When in a drug-induced state of high energy and aggression, children will be less hesitant to pick up their guns and kill. A fourteen-year-old recalls his time fighting in Sierra Leone and Liberia: "We would then inhale cocaine. During operations, I sometimes would take it two or three times a day. I felt strong and powerful. I felt no fear. When I was demobilized I felt weak and cold..." (Singer 2005, 83). Under the influence of drugs, child soldiers commit violent offenses that they would not have without the drugs. One former child combatant, Marc, from the Congo says: "Under the effect of drugs, I once raped one or two women and I regret it" (International Labour Organization April 2003, 46).

Drugs can also deter escape. In the case of the RUF, the combined use of fear-inhibiting drugs like crack cocaine, gunpowder, marijuana, and angel dust served to disorient and confuse abductees (Eck 2014, 393-394). Drugged up and far from home, children will not know how to escape, or where to flee.

Despite their effectiveness at acquiring children, coercive methods of recruitment can be costly in terms of military and organizational efficiency. Drugs are problematic because they often lead to erratic and unpredictable behavior, which can be detrimental to group cohesion and social dynamics (Eck 2014, 382). As noted, another disadvantage of using coercive methods is that it can antagonize the civilian population, who could turn against the rebel group if it is terrorizing their children (Eck 2014, 365). For reasons like these, some armed groups decide to recruit by using persuasion. Persuasion is an attempt to influence without the threat of violence.

In persuasion, the persuadee has free will to modify his or her beliefs or actions (Metta Center 2014).

Enticement

In an attempt to persuade children to want to become fighters, armed groups broadcast messages glorifying war and soldiers. Sending appealing messages works especially well for child soldier recruitment because children are impressionable and look up to powerful figures. One survey of child soldiers in Africa found that a substantial 15 percent volunteered because they were simply fascinated by the prestige and thrill of serving in a unit and having a gun (Singer 2005, 66). Htay, a Burmese former child combatant, explains why he joined the armed forces at age fifteen: “I admired soldiers, their guns and crisp, neat uniforms. I just wanted to fight the way they did in the movies and so I joined the army” (Sawyer and Ottaway 2013). A family member of a Huthi child soldier spoke about the boys who are recruited by this group: “They’re just excited to shoot Kalashnikovs and guns and wear military uniforms” (Amnesty International 2017). Although there is no threat of violence against the child, sending alluring messages can still be seen as a coercive recruitment method because it involves manipulation. The life of a soldier is not glamorous, but if influential figures say so, and at-risk children do not know any better, they can come to believe it.

III. Roles

Many armed groups use child soldiers to perform a diverse array of tasks both on and off the battlefield. Children can take direct and indirect part in hostilities by fighting or aiding those who do.

Foot soldiers

One position children occupy in war is that of foot soldiers. The bulk of foot soldiers that made up Joseph Kony's army were children (Briggs 2005, 108-109). On the battlefield, children are often positioned on the front lines, where the likelihood of being killed is the highest. According to UNICEF research from 2003, 91 percent of child soldiers served in Africa as combatants (UNICEF 2003, 19). Of this number, 87 percent served on the front lines (International Labour Organization April 2003, 43). In the Congo, one child fighter told Human Rights Watch: "There are lots of children with Ntaganda now and they send us to the front lines so we're the first to die. It's as if they take us to kill us" (Gregory 2012). The Huthi rebel group in Yemen also recruits young boys to fight as child combatants on the front lines of the ongoing civil war. Since the beginning of the conflict in 2015, United Nations agencies have documented 1,500 cases of children recruited by all parties in the conflict (Amnesty International 2017).

Despite the limitations on children's capacities, it appears that one reason for this use is the belief that children can be effective foot soldiers. A former child fighter in the Mozambican National Resistance group explained that his group grew to "not use many adults to fight because they are not good fighters... kids have more stamina, are better at surviving in the bush, do not complain and follow directions" (Singer 2005, 83). A Khmer Rouge commander similarly commented, "it takes a little time, but eventually the younger ones become the most effective soldiers of them all" (Ibid).

Suicide Bombers

Child soldiers are commonly used as suicide bombers because their nonthreatening appearance generally makes them subject to less scrutiny than adults. Additionally, children are more impressionable than adults, and more easily persuaded to carry out suicide bombings. One Taliban commander told a reporter: “Children accept what you say after you talk to them just a couple of times. They can be used in rickshaw, bicycle, or motorcycle [suicide bombing] attacks” (Logan 2015). Mia Bloom explains that rebel leaders use trickery to direct children to carry out suicide attacks by telling them they won’t feel any pain during the explosion because they are becoming martyrs (Boghani 2015). Child suicide bombers who fight for religious causes are assured that an afterlife in heaven awaits them (Logan 2015).

The number of suicide bombing attacks carried out by children has increased significantly in recent years. As of 2012, al-Qaeda and the Taliban have constructed suicide training facilities in Afghanistan and Pakistan that have trained over 5,000 Pakistani children, many as young as eight, as suicide bombers (Crimi 2012). A UNICEF report revealed that from 2014 to 2016, child suicide bombing attacks quadrupled in northeastern Nigeria, where Boko Haram operates (Markey 2016). Between 2014 and 2017, Boko Haram coerced 117 children in Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger into attempting suicide attacks (UNICEF n.d.).

Logistical Support Roles

Logistical support is necessary for any organization to operate smoothly. Children can serve armed groups in ways other than fighting by acting as domestic servants, porters, messengers, and spies.

Children are often used as spies because they do not arouse suspicion. One rebel commander in the LRA explained that children are especially good at obtaining information. This is because children can easily sneak across enemy lines, since no one suspects them due to their age (Mermet and Jaffré 1999). Child soldiers frequently serve rebel leaders as domestic servants. A former LRA child fighter, Dominic Ongwen, recalls how he was assigned to households of top commanders, including LRA founder and leader Joseph Kony. Like many of his peers, Dominic helped prepare food and carry commanders' belongings (BBC December 2016). In addition, some children help steal from civilians to provide supplies for the army. One fourteen-year-old girl recruited by the LRA said, "I was not given a gun, but I helped in the abductions and grabbing of food from villagers" (Mermet and Jaffré 1999). Edward T., age eighteen, was with the LRA for six months and recalls spending a lot of his time stealing from homes, as per the officers' instructions (Human Rights Watch July 2003).

Even in logistical support roles, children can still be treated as cannon fodder. Almost all of these jobs put children in high-risk situations. Mermet and Jaffré explain: "When they are not actively engaged in combat, they can often be seen manning checkpoints; adult soldiers can normally be seen standing a further 15 metres behind the barrier so that if bullets start flying, it is the children who are the first victims" (Mermet and Jaffré 1999). Established in 1964 as an armed wing of the Communist party, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC) recruited Luis at age fourteen (BBC November 2016). After training him for eight months, he was promoted to bomb-maker. Luis would carefully break up particles of metal supports from houses and put them in bombs. Although Luis was in a non-combat role, he explained how he was still in peril: "It was dangerous work because you cannot mix chemicals... as you prepared the cylinders, they could go off and kill many" (Briggs 2005, 57). Child domestic servants are

commonly subject to physical and sexual abuse, as well as inhumane working conditions; a spy or messenger can be captured and tortured by an enemy group; and raiding a home can quickly turn into a violent altercation with the civilian population or homeowner.

Girls

“...The abuses that are perpetrated against girls belong in a category of their own, not just because they are often so extreme but also because they are abuses against children. Unfortunately, the analysis or even mention of girl children as participants in conflict situations is rarely found in feminist literature,” (Fox 2004, 470).

Some scholars, like Fox, are disappointed at the lack of attention given to female child soldiers in existing literature. Webster argues child soldiering disproportionately harms girls, because they often carry the additional burden of sexual slavery or forced marriage to a rebel commander (Webster 2007). Young girls are estimated to make up 40 percent of all child combatants and are present in the ranks of virtually all non-state armed groups (United Nations 2015; Costache n.d., 1).

Girls can be ruthless soldiers. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) has maintained a Women’s Front since 1985 called the “Liberation Birds.” Well into the 2000s, these girls were a core element of the Tigers’ forces and have an international reputation as being some of the most tough, committed warriors in the world (Briggs 2005, 84). Christine from the DRC corroborates: “We were dangerous! ... You know that I was with Vanessa in the front line, people had better not come to bother us... or we killed you! When you are a girl, you have to be harder, or the men they don’t respect you” (Brett and Specht 2004, 85). Groups who use girl soldiers defy social norms by taking young girls out of their traditional societal roles and turning them into brutal killers, and the girls must adapt accordingly to survive.

In addition to serving as foot soldiers, girls perform a variety of other tasks for rebels. In Sierra Leone, girl soldiers fought on the battlefield, mined for diamonds, operated as spies, cooks, and provided sexual services (Ibid, 2). Young, prepubescent girls abducted by Boko Haram cared for commanders' children and helped their wives. Upon reaching puberty, these girls became wives to other commanders (BBC December 2016). Boko Haram also uses girls as suicide bombers, and to a larger extent than other groups; girls have accounted for the majority of suicide bombings by Boko Haram (Warner and Matfess 2017, 41). Boko Haram has deployed more female bombers than any other terrorist group in history (Warner and Matfess 2017, V). Civilians have become increasingly wary of females for this reason. Hassan, a member of a local Nigerian civilian militia says: "I get afraid when I see women." (Searcey October 2017). When perceived as a threat, girls can be isolated from the surrounding communities they could possibly defect to. In this case, the rebels have effectively stripped away any outside options. Moreover, since the rebels have taken these girls out of the traditional womanly roles, they could be rejected by their families and communities upon return to society. Thus, staying with the rebel group could appear to be the better option.

In sum, girl soldiers, like their male counterparts, are deprived of childhood once under the wing of armed groups. Their crucial formative years are defined by violence and bloodshed instead of playing and learning. Aziz from Pakistan reflects: "I have lost my chance to get an education; the time has passed now" (Brett and Specht 2004, 121).

IV. Conclusion

“...There was no food... we were made to kill... but the most bad thing is that we were told to hate. We were told that if we touched these people they can’t feel pain. They were different than us.”

--C., child soldier from ages nine to fifteen (Singer 2005, 103).

This chapter identified critical environmental factors that lead children to join armed groups as well as methods rebel groups employ to take advantage of a child’s inherent vulnerability. The societal roles they usually occupy—students, friends, community contributors, daughters and sons—are replaced by the duties outlined in this chapter, leaving youngsters to wonder what life could have been if they had had the power and choice to shape their own destinies.

ISIS’ child soldiers take on many of the same responsibilities described in this section. However, ISIS has different reasons for recruiting youth. Its motivations are deeply rooted in ideology and the quest for statehood. Unlike many of the groups mentioned in this chapter, ISIS is not using children as cannon fodder for victory in battle today. Rather, ISIS is planting the seeds of tomorrow’s insurgency to ensure the future of its cause.

Chapter Three: The Indoctrinated Child Soldier

I. Introduction

I have maintained throughout this paper so far that children are not effective fighters, mostly due to their limited physical capabilities. What would make a child an effective soldier? I argue that ideologically indoctrinating a new or prospective child recruit is key to creating a lethal soldier. By shaping a child's belief system during their crucial developmental years, this combatant will remain committed to fighting for the group's cause throughout their lives. I assert that ISIS' child fighters are and will continue to be effective warriors because of the group's intense ideological indoctrination process.

ISIS' child soldiers are more effective than child soldiers in other groups. This chapter compares Boko Haram and Nazi Germany with ISIS to further elucidate how ISIS' use of child fighters is different from other cases. I begin by discussing how ideologically indoctrinated soldiers benefit armed groups and contribute to a lasting existence. Next, I explore Boko Haram's tactics, and analyze how its lack of an indoctrination process affects the group's effectiveness in inflicting mass casualties. I then examine Adolf Hitler's practice of youth indoctrination during World War II, and compare his pedagogical vision and methods with that of al-Baghdadi. Finally, I illustrate how ISIS' ideological indoctrination process is distinct and novel.

II. Importance of Ideological Indoctrination in Warfare

Siegel argues that ideology shapes consciousness. He coins the term "ideological determinism," holding that ideology rather than reasoning decides thoughts and actions. For the

ideological determinist, writes Siegel, “rationality itself is a function of ideology, and what counts as good reason will depend on the ideological stance from which one evaluates reasons” (Siegel 1988, 69). The ideological determinist sounds quite similar to the ideologically indoctrinated individual who, as established, is unable to question the ideas in which he or she was indoctrinated. In the context of child soldiering, P.W. Singer defines indoctrination as “the act of imbuing a child with the new worldview of a soldier” (Singer 2005, 70). He asserts that indoctrination is especially important for child combatants because, “children are obviously not the prototypical recruit, so their indoctrination is a critical determinant to the overall success of any putative child soldier doctrine” (Singer 2005, 70).

I previously noted that ISIS is not just a terrorist group, but also an idea, and a battle of ideas cannot be defeated by combat (Brooks 2004). A soldier’s gun may be taken away, but his or her beliefs cannot be, especially when those beliefs have been instilled in them from a young age. By the time ISIS’ ideological indoctrination process is complete, it will be impossible to reverse the psychological damage that will inspire these children to commit acts of violence for years to come. In light of this, ending the war against ISIS will be difficult and will likely take a long time.

From a strategy standpoint, it is unwise for an armed group with long-term goals *not* to indoctrinate its recruits for two reasons: First, non-indoctrinated soldiers will not be as dedicated to the cause. If the group is defeated or facing a likely defeat, the soldiers will abandon it and take their military expertise elsewhere to fight for another group. For example, in the aftermath of the United States invasion of Iraq in 2003, the American forces simply disbanded the Iraqi army. Former Iraqi soldiers took their valuable skills and knowledge elsewhere, forming their own small militias. If ISIS were to be conquered, the same phenomenon would not occur. Its

child and adult followers would seek to reunite with the group, because they would remain loyal to the Caliphate. These soldiers would not join other causes nor abandon their devotion to the Islamic State upon military defeat given their indoctrination.

Second, terrorist groups are highly secretive and need to maintain this secrecy to carry out operations without the government's knowledge. As we will see in the case of Boko Haram, a group that does not indoctrinate its youth increases the risk that its young soldiers fail to follow orders, and that they also reveal key information to authorities. These non-indoctrinated fighters have no attachment to the group's ideology and have no desire to sacrifice their lives for it.

III. The Child Soldiers of Boko Haram

Similar to ISIS, Boko Haram has religious and territorial ambitions. Boko Haram seeks to overthrow the Nigerian state and institute its strict interpretation of Sharia law (Warner and Matfess 2017, 1). There is one critical difference between the two groups: Unlike ISIS, Boko Haram does not indoctrinate its young recruits with the group's radical ideology; children are simply abducted and immediately tossed into battle. We can observe how much of an impact this absence of indoctrination has on the group's effectiveness by examining Boko Haram's rate of success in suicide bombings, when soldiers undergo the true test of loyalty by sacrificing their lives for a group.

In their study of 434 suicide-bombing attacks carried out by Boko Haram between 2011 and 2017, Warner and Matfess found that Boko Haram's suicide bombings overall resulted in fewer casualties than suicide bombings by other groups (Ibid, 11). Boko Haram soldiers often failed to detonate the bombs, and when they did, they killed fewer people per detonation than other groups that use suicide bombers (Ibid, 4). To explain this occurrence, *The New York Times*

interviewed eighteen girls abducted by Boko Haram who had been sent on suicide bombing missions but refused to detonate the bomb (Searcey 2017). In the interviews, not a single one of these girls expressed that they *ever* had any intention of detonating the bomb. Instead, once the bomb had been strapped to them, they promptly turned themselves in to Nigerian officials or asked civilians for help. Fourteen-year-old Maimuma explained that when Boko Haram abducted her and tied a bomb to her waist, instead of approaching her designated target, she went to a Nigerian soldier who helped remove the bomb from her body. Maimuma did not want to die for Boko Haram and felt no allegiance to the group's mission. When asked about the girls who did detonate their bombs, Maimuma maintained that they did so because they were scared and did not know where to go for help, not because they were loyal to Boko Haram (Searcey 2017).

Boko Haram is compromised when episodes like this occur. Authorities are now in possession of the bombing device and will know how sophisticated Boko Haram's technology is, and where the parts came from. Moreover, as defectors, these soldiers willingly cooperate with authorities by providing useful information. They could even possess knowledge of where and when the next attack will happen, foiling Boko Haram's future plans.

IV. The Child Soldiers of Nazi Germany

“These boys and girls enter our organizations [at] ten years of age, and often for the first time get a little fresh air; after four years of the Young Folk they go on to the Hitler Youth, where we have them for another four years... And even if they are still not complete National Socialists, they go to Labor Service and are smoothed out there for another six, seven months... And whatever class consciousness or social status might be left... the Wehrmacht [German armed forces] will take care of that.”

--Adolf Hitler (1938) (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum n.d.)

The most prominent historical case of widespread ideological indoctrination of children is Nazi Germany. In 1920, the National Socialists of Germany were established as a political party vying for complete control of Germany. To ensure the survival of their group, the National Socialists turned to the youth of Germany. Adolf Hitler, the leader of the Nazi Party, intended to create a generation of ideal German children, which he described as: “A violently active, dominating, intrepid, brutal youth... Youth must be all those things. It must be indifferent to pain. There must be no weakness or tenderness in it. I want to see once more in its eyes the gleam of pride and independence of the beast of prey...I intend to have an athletic youth... I will have no intellectual training. Knowledge is ruin to my young men” (Rauschnig 1939, 246-47). At the 1935 Nuremberg Rally, Hitler announced: “We have undertaken to give the German people an education that begins already in youth and will never come to an end... Nobody will be able to say that he has a time in which he is left entirely alone to himself” (Simkin n.d.). From 1933 to 1936 the “Hitler Youth,” or *Hitlerjugend*, increased from 50,000 to 5.4 million members before it became mandatory in 1939 (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum n.d.). The Hitler Youth underwent ideological indoctrination and combat training to prepare for a war to defend Germany. The National Socialists carried out an extensive indoctrination process by taking control of Germany’s primary school system and instructing youth in the superiority of the Aryan race, geographic expansion, and the importance of nationalism (Miller 2016, 3). School children read stories sensationalizing militarism and were instructed to follow Hitler. In addition to schooling, *Hitlerjugend* offered extracurricular and outdoor activities like rifle shooting, camping, and war games (Miller 2016, 4). Hitler used recreational activities strategically to enhance the athleticism of his youth, which would help when they began the final stage of the process, military training.

The indoctrination process for the Hitler Youth was both intricate and intense. Nevertheless, by the end of its first month in battle, 60 percent of the Hitler Youth Division was dead, wounded, or missing (History Place 1999). The fruitless *Hitlerjugend* was withdrawn from the Normandy Front, failed in the Battle of the Bulge, and proved unable to recapture Budapest. After numerous defeats, German Commander Kurt Meyer described the once confident and eager Nazi youths as now exhausted and filthy, presenting “a picture of deep human misery” (Ibid). In 1945, with only 455 soldiers and one tank left, the 12th SS-Panzer Division *Hitlerjugend* surrendered to the United States. A year after the surrender, the Allies required German youth to go through a de-Nazification process and training in democracy in an attempt to reverse the effects of twelve years of indoctrination (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum n.d.). In practice, de-Nazification did little to address the psychological issues or mindsets of the Hitler Youth. Instead, it was more of a nation-wide re-structuring process: Nazi organizations and institutions were dissolved, Nazi propaganda was censored, and war crime trials were held. Under the watchful eye of the Allies, the remaining Hitler Youth had few opportunities to reunite. They had nowhere to go, and lacked the skills to fight an underground battle (Riddle 2017). Hitler did not train his young army in guerilla warfare tactics, and the aged leaders were either arrested or lost credibility with the fall of the Third Reich. Accepting defeat was the only realistic option for the lost generation of former Hitler Youth.

V. Hitler Youth and the Cubs of the Caliphate

“Could it happen again today? Of course it can. Children are like empty vessels: you can fill them with good, you can fill them with evil...”

--Alfons Heck as quoted in *Heil Hitler: Confessions of a Hitler Youth* (1991).

There are striking similarities between Adolf Hitler's vision for the youth of Germany and the vision for youth that past and present ISIS leaders have declared. Ideologically, al-Baghdadi and Hitler both believe that their followers are destined to rule the world (Webb 2016). The "Thousand Year Reich," like the Caliphate, needed the next generation of followers so it would not die with the current generation. Nazi Germany and the Islamic State have similarities in the way that children and pedagogy are used as means for ensuring the survival of the group (Benotman and Malik 2016, 32). In the 1930s, Hitler addressed the children of Germany and proclaimed: "You, my youth, are our nation's most precious guarantee for a great future..." (Ayer, Waterford, and Heck 1995, 23). This sentiment was echoed in a 2005 letter from al-Zawahiri (the present leader of al-Qaeda) to ISIS' founder Zarqawi. Al-Zawahiri writes, "one of the most important things facing the leadership is the enthusiasm of the supporters, and especially of the energetic young men who are burning to make the religion victorious" (Global Security 2005).

ISIS and the National Socialists are different from other groups who practice child soldiering because they actually *prefer* children to adults. A Syrian civilian recalled that ISIS leaders told adults: "We have given up on you, we care about the new generation," (Karam and Janssen 2015). Hitler expressed a similar opinion: "We older ones are used up... We are rotten to the marrow... look at these young men and boys! What material! With them I can make a new world" (Rempel 1989, 1). One former ISIS child soldier, Riad, told Human Rights Watch that "the leader of the camp said [ISIS] liked the younger ones better... He told me, 'Tomorrow they'll be a stronger leader or a stronger fighter'" (Human Rights Watch 2014, 21). Favoring the "younger ones" supports the theory that ISIS is not recruiting for success in battle today. If Riad,

a sixteen year old, felt that children even younger than him were being prioritized, then operational effectiveness and success in current battles must not be ISIS' primary concern.

Hitler and al-Baghdadi prefer children to adults because they view them as blank slates. Children come into the world without any prior knowledge that would give them reason to question what someone tells them. Adults would have to adopt extremist ideologies later in life when opinions have already been formed (Benotman and Malik 2016, 32). Indoctrinating children will ensure that the ideology is a part of their identity and how they view the world. It is for this reason that child soldiers can be viewed as superior to adult soldiers.

Nazi Germany and ISIS bear significant resemblance in their indoctrination tactics as well. Like the Hitler Youth, the Cubs of the Caliphate are indoctrinated by means of propaganda, school lessons, organized activities, and public demonstrations. Whereas Hitler used pamphlets, posters, and films and radio to indoctrinate the youth of Germany, ISIS uses social media platforms and produces professional-looking propaganda videos to garner mass attention and spread its doctrines (Webb 2016).

The National Socialists staged public demonstrations and mass rallies, declaring them national holidays. Former Nazi child soldier Alfons Heck recalled a rally on Hitler Youth Day: "Shortly before noon, 80,000 Hitler Youth were lined up in rows as long as the entire stadium. When Hitler finally appeared, we greeted him with a thundering, triple 'Sieg Heil,' (Hail to Victory)... Then his voice rose... 'You, my youth,' he shouted, with his eyes seeming to stare right at me, 'Never forget that one day you will rule the world.' For minutes on end, we shouted at the top of our lungs, with tears streaming down our faces: 'Sieg Heil, Sieg Heil, Sieg Heil!' From that moment on, I belonged to Adolf Hitler body and soul" (Ayer, Waterford, and Heck 1995, 23).

There are propaganda videos and photos of ISIS holding rallies in town squares, depicting similar scenes of youth rushing to surround soldiers with cheers and excitement. A substantial 31 percent of total ISIS propaganda showcases ISIS providing schooling, medical and civil services, and jobs (Benotman and Malik 2016, 18). This utopian and state-building propaganda is an attempt to show the public that ISIS has legitimate statehood (Ibid). Although there is no ISIS nation yet, ISIS is trying to construct a special kind of nationalism by ideologically indoctrinating its youth through propaganda. ISIS is attempting to create a national identity among children to bring about loyalty to the Islamic State.

Schoolchildren living in ISIS-controlled territories learn basic skills in chilling ways. Math textbooks contain practice exercises that consist of counting bullets or machine guns (Gramer 2017). Being tech savvy, the group has developed an app for mobile phones intended to help children learn the alphabet. Here are a few examples of how the app teaches the ABCs (Gramer 2017):

“B is for Bunduqiyya (gun)”
“D is for Dababa (tank)”
“S is for Sayf (sword)”

Mia Bloom explains the logic behind this learning approach: “There’s a need to physically and mentally prepare children to be the ‘next generation’ of fighters... It exposes the children to violence in a routine and daily fashion so it ceases to be shocking and normalizes violence” (Gramer 2017). Less violent imagery was present in the lessons taught in Nazi-controlled German schools, but information was still heavily laden with bias. Educators taught in a fashion that revered Germany while condemning other countries and races. History textbooks explained that Germany suffered from overcrowding, and for all Germans to have a home, the country needed to regain its colonies. The story of how Germany lost its colonies was told in a

way to incite rage towards other nations, which would rouse the youth to fight a war to defend the German state and take back its colonies (Miller 2016, 35).

Al-Baghdadi is more successful than Hitler was in effectively cutting off outside options for their child recruits. In Nazi Germany, German parents were free to leave Germany to avoid putting their children in the Hitler Youth (Facing History n.d.). ISIS has made leaving difficult, if not impossible. There is no way for anyone living in ISIS-controlled areas to register their newborn child with government officials. No independently issued documents can help establish a child's identity, so the only state these children technically belong to is the Islamic State (Houry 2016). Refugees have a hard enough time finding asylum in other countries, but without proper papers, countries can turn them away or even arrest them.

An analysis of the Hitler Youth provides useful insight regarding ISIS' rationale for the recruitment of child soldiers: Both groups have indicated that their purpose in indoctrinating children was to prepare for the future. It is not unreasonable to suggest that ISIS leaders may have taken notes from Nazi Germany. When the Egyptian Armed Forces captured ISIS troops in 2016, a photo they took of the hideout was released on Twitter (Webb 2016). By no mistake, an Arabic version of Hitler's famed autobiography, *Mein Kampf* (1925), can be spotted amongst the remaining belongings of soldiers who were captured there. If ISIS is taking tactics from Hitler, we can conclude that their goals may be similar.

VI. The Indoctrinated Child Soldiers of the Islamic State

What is unique about ISIS' practices of child soldiering and ideological indoctrination is that no group has ever started the process as young. Whereas Hitler began indoctrinating boys at the age of ten, ten-year-olds living under the Islamic State have already graduated from Cub

training camp (Omar, Vinograd, and Balkiz 2014). Noman Benotman, President of counter-extremist organization Quilliam, asserts that indoctrination in the Islamic State begins at birth and only increases in schools and training camps. In 2016, over 31,000 women living under the Islamic State became pregnant (Benotman and Malik 2016, 8). Many of these pregnancies are the result of systematic rape committed by ISIS members who wish to breed the next generation of fighters (Otten 2017). Nikita Malik, a senior researcher at Quilliam, informs us that the unusually large number of pregnant women ““shows it’s not being done randomly in any way, this is a very long-term preparation for these children to grow up with severe religious, theological and national indoctrination”” (Cowburn 2016).

ISIS’ extreme brutality featured in propaganda containing children also makes them different from other groups who use child soldiers. ISIS propaganda is not by any means limited to the attractive photos and videos described above; the majority of Islamic State media featuring children relates to violence (Benotman and Malik 2016, 18). By featuring children as fighters, ISIS is indicating to foreign governments, “although you prepare your armies, we too are preparing ours” (*Wilayat Raqqa* 2016).

In an intensely disturbing propaganda video titled “He Made Me Alive With His Blood,” a toddler points a gun at a man who is shackled to a fence, and subsequently fires multiple shots into his head (Clarion Project 2017). The accuracy of the toddler’s shots is remarkable, suggesting that this child has already undergone some training and is familiar with how to shoot a gun effectively. After the child shoots the man multiple times, he raises his gun into the air and shouts “Allahu Akbar” twice, a cry that can be translated as “God is greater.” This exclamation can be taken as evidence that the child has already associated in his mind that this violent act and loyalty to Allah go hand in hand. The child understands that by committing this violence, he has

done right by Allah. The ideology of ISIS has already been ingrained, and the exposure to violence has only amplified his ferocity.

The role occupied by the child in this video is also of importance. The previous chapter identified roles child combatants traditionally occupy in war, and executioner was not discussed. This is because no other group has used child soldiers as executioners so extensively. Over a six-month period in 2016, ISIS propaganda featured 12 child executioners (Benotman and Malik 2016, 19). Taking it into one's own hands to kill a disbeliever at point-blank range is an intense experience that displays utmost loyalty to the group. ISIS' executions, while often public or filmed, manifest as a more intimate form of killing than suicide bombing or battlefield fire because of how close the child soldier is to the victim in proximity, as well as the dramatic build up to the moment. These factors make the role of executioner a more emotional and ritual experience that could ensue further allegiance from children who undertake this duty. Mia Bloom describes the graduation of Cubs from witnessing executions to carrying them out as the "final, and most extreme test of loyalty within the organization" (Bloom 2015).

ISIS uses this kind of macabre propaganda featuring child soldiers to wage its war with the West: "They never have to win a battle but can instead profit in the realm of public opinion from the glorious martyrdom entailed in their defeats. We think the struggle is fought on the ground, but they know the struggle is really fought on satellite TV, and they are far more sophisticated than we are in using it" (Brooks 2004).

The effort and resources that go into preparing the youth of the Islamic State can be taken as an indicator that these children are not being recruited just to die. Mia Bloom explains: "How much you educate the child indicates whether you see them as the next generation or cannon

fodder” (Boghani 2015). Bloom underscores this point by drawing a comparison with child fighters in African conflicts, who typically do not receive any sort of education (Bloom 2015).

Experts estimate that the Islamic State is currently recruiting thousands of children (Carter 2016). ISIS militant Abu Dujana boasted that there are Cub training camps in every region under ISIS control (Omar, Vinograd, and Balkiz 2014). Given how many child soldiers and training camps exist, one can reasonably expect that maintaining and growing this operation is extremely expensive. The amount of money ISIS is willing to spend on its child combatants is unusual, especially for a non-state group with limited funds. Islamic State recruiters pay parents as much as \$500/month per child to attend ISIS training camps, which adds up to a significant sum of money (Alfred 2016).

The emphasis ISIS has placed on ideological indoctrination answers the question of why ISIS opts for child soldiers despite their need for more training. Author David Brooks explains, “When you see that our enemies are primarily an intellectual movement, not a terrorist army, you can see why they are in no hurry. With their extensive indoctrination infrastructure of madrassas and mosques, they’re still building strength, laying the groundwork for decades of struggle” (Brooks 2004). By the time the Cubs of the Caliphate develop into grown adults, they will be so indoctrinated and obedient that they will constitute the deadliest force on the battlefield. In a 2015 documentary, a fourteen-year-old former ISIS child combatant testifies, “They are making a new generation for the Caliphate to fight infidels. There are many children who now have absolute loyalty ... and you will never be able to persuade him to give up his ideas” (Williams 2015). This child soldier articulates the crux of the challenge posed by ideologically indoctrinated child soldiers—they will never abandon their fight.

VII. Conclusion

The Hitler Youth was unsuccessful on the battlefield mostly due to Allied artillery and air superiority. ISIS would likely face similar force today if international actors invaded, but ISIS would not fall to the same fate because its members are not as geographically isolated as Nazi followers were. ISIS members are not concentrated in one country, but rather can be found all over the world. Attacking one region will not defeat all the ideologically indoctrinated and committed members of ISIS. Moreover, continued airstrikes in Iraq and Syria will only further destabilize the region, making it even more of a breeding ground for small terrorist militias. In the past few years, Western forces in Iraq and Syria have pushed ISIS members out to other areas across the Middle East and North Africa, where they can find safe haven in underground cells or refugee and Internally Displaced Persons camps. If these individuals are ideologically indoctrinated and therefore do not lose sight of the mission as ISIS intends, they can hide out until the Western forces leave and plot their next attack in the mean time.

Chapter Four: The Final Battle

“Their apocalyptic narrative goes something like this: the military fortunes of the Islamic State grow and grow, using military ground forces, sleeper cells in Europe—perhaps even stolen nuclear weapons. Terrorist attacks and refugee streams drive a hard wedge between Muslim and infidel populations around the world, so that the Muslims worldwide will have no choice but to join ISIS and become their army, overthrowing local governments. All of this draws infidel armies into a climactic battle at Dabiq in Northern Syria in 2025. The West is defeated and the caliphate is global. But it does not last long. New gods, Gog and Magog, appear and the entire planet is destroyed while all true believers are raptured to heaven. Game over.”

--Former U.S. Diplomat John Graham (Graham 2016)

I. Introduction

Now that it has been established ISIS is ideologically indoctrinating its child soldiers to ensure the survival of the Caliphate, we must turn to what kind of events ISIS might be preparing its youth for. ISIS’ vision for the future includes fighting a dramatic final battle in Dabiq, Syria. ISIS wants to goad the United States or other Western forces into putting troops on the ground and fighting a conventional war on ISIS soil (Wood 2015). In an ISIS propaganda video from 2015, a masked executioner states: “Here we are, burying the first American crusader in Dabiq, eagerly waiting for the remainder of your armies to arrive,” (Ibid).

In this chapter I examine the U.S.’s current approach to fighting ISIS and its child soldiers, and discuss how the Trump administration may shift tactics. I consider what would happen if the United States launched a full-scale invasion of Syria in the near future, and argue that ISIS is training its child soldiers in anticipation of this battle. Finally, I reflect on how child fighters would change the nature of the war.

II. The United States' Approach to Fighting ISIS, 2017-2018

“My message to Trump, the puppet of the Jews, Allah has promised this victory and he has promised you for defeat... By the law of Allah we will have victory, so get ready for the fighting has just begun”

--Yusuf, ten-year-old ISIS child soldier (Dearden 2017).

Pentagon officials recently declared the defeat of the physical Caliphate, citing ISIS' substantial territorial losses in Iraq and Syria (Qiu 2018). In January 2015, the Islamic State controlled 35,000 square miles of land. As of January 2018, the group controls only 2,500 square miles (Ibid). However, territory does not tell the full story. The Pentagon's statement was premature and overly optimistic, as revealed by a *New York Times* article published just one month after the declaration (Qiu 2018). The article cited reactions of experts and officials to what was discovered in the aftermath of a U.S. airstrike on January 20th, 2018. The strike hit a major IS command center, which was found to be housing “a heavy concentration of ISIS fighters who appear to have been massing for movement...” (Schmitt 2018). U.S. officials were taken aback by how many ISIS fighters were there. Major General James B. Jarrard reflected on his surprise: “ISIS continues to demonstrate the ability to mass large numbers in its attempt to retain a stronghold in Syria” (Ibid).

In the article, experts overwhelmingly disputed the Pentagon's assertion that ISIS had been defeated. Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen stressed that ISIS fighters will not disappear, and that they are fleeing to other parts of the region to hide out underground, where they can safely plan attacks (Schmitt 2018). General Selva, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs said: “The thought that these foreign fighters who have participated in this fight now for over

two years will quietly leave Syria and return to their jobs as shopkeepers in Paris, in Brussels, in Copenhagen, is ludicrous... That's a very compelling problem" (Ibid).

In January 2018, Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis gave a speech emphasizing the threat ISIS poses even without territory (Mattis 2018). This view reflects that of many experts, who expect that ISIS' violent extremist attacks overseas will increase before they decrease (IHS Markit 2017). The rationale behind this projection is that territorial losses are galvanizing ISIS to escalate its attacks to compensate (Ibid). ISIS leaders have lent support to this theory in the past. Former War Minister of the Islamic State, Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, expressed in 2008 that the Islamic State would compensate for events that undermine ISIS' authority by increasing killings: "Some have written fatwas calling for the dissolution of the [Islamic] State. They have claimed that it is a paper state, an Internet state. They have encouraged criminals to act against it. Blood has been shed on account of their fatwas" (al-Muhajir 2008). In addition to expecting that attacks abroad will increase as ISIS continues to lose territory, analysts have asserted that ISIS has already prepared its members for the loss of territory, and that neither military nor territorial conquest will change the beliefs of ISIS followers (IHS Markit 2017).

At the time of this writing, the Trump administration is contemplating options for moving ahead with the fight against ISIS. There are currently multiple possibilities on the table but no final decisions have been made. It is unknown what changes Trump will make to the current strategies for fighting ISIS, which mostly consist of supporting the Iraqi army and precision airstrikes. On one hand, Trump pledges "America First," a position of non-interventionism and staying out of other countries. On the other hand, Trump has used aggressive rhetoric when asked about how he will defeat ISIS, such as promising to "bomb the hell" out of ISIS-controlled areas (Starr and Collinson 2017). In 2017, when asked about how the Trump administration

would change U.S. military tactics in Iraq and Syria, Secretary Mattis responded: “I think it’s getting there as rapidly as possible, where it would be a more accelerated campaign” (Starr and Collinson 2017). Albeit a vague statement, an “accelerated campaign” could involve eliminating the limit that Obama imposed on the number of U.S. troops permitted to be stationed in Iraq. Obama set the cap at no more than 5,262 American soldiers (Starr and Collinson 2017).

The United States seems hesitant to put more troops on the ground, but multiple officials associated with the current administration believe it may be necessary to defeat ISIS. Michael Flynn admitted, “the sad fact is that we have to put troops on the ground. We won’t succeed against this enemy with air strikes alone... This won’t be possible quickly” (Flynn 2015). General Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, revealed that the U.S. military is considering staying in Iraq for many years to stabilize it after the awaited defeat of ISIS (Starr and Collinson 2017). Most recently, Major General James Jarrard of Operation Inherent Resolve said that the fight to liberate Syria is far from over, indicating that American troops will remain in Syria indeterminately (Syeed 2018). Since deploying more troops to Syria and Iraq and intensifying the fight against ISIS on the ground is a possibility acknowledged by a number of U.S. officials, it is essential to prepare for what could follow as a result of that decision.

Many experts caution that sending more troops and thus escalating the war on the ground could strengthen ISIS. John Graham warns that deploying American troops to the region for the “final battle” that ISIS is preparing for would be a mistake (Graham 2016). He believes that doing so would provide a boost to ISIS’ recruiting because the leadership could then claim that the prophecy is coming true (Ibid). Journalist Graeme Wood concurred with this statement after seeing a flurry of tweets in 2015: “After mujahideen reported having seen American soldiers in battle, Islamic State Twitter accounts erupted in spasms of pleasure, like overenthusiastic hosts

upon the arrival of the first guests at a party” (Wood 2015). Wood explains further what these celebratory Tweets indicate: “If the United States were to invade, the Islamic State’s obsession with battle at Dabiq suggests that it might send vast resources there, as if in a conventional battle... the risks of escalation are enormous... An invasion would be a huge propaganda victory for jihadists worldwide... another invasion and occupation would confirm that suspicion, and bolster recruitment. Add the incompetence of our previous efforts as occupiers, and we have reason for reluctance” (Wood 2015).

III. The United States’ Approach to Addressing Child Soldiering in Iraq and Syria

“To remain relevant, military studies must address all the new actors in warfare, even the littlest ones.”

--P.W. Singer (Singer 2001, 157)

Singer theorizes that, “child soldiers are an inescapable new feature of the modern battlefield” (Singer 2001, 167). Singer underscores this belief in many of his scholarly works, arguing that the increasing use of child combatants demands more attention from the U.S. government and military (Singer 2001; Singer 2003; Singer 2005). The Trump administration has somewhat acknowledged that human trafficking is a big and urgent issue. Human trafficking is a large umbrella term that includes the use of children in armed conflicts. At a Session on Domestic and International Human Trafficking in February 2017, Trump promised that his administration would prioritize the end of human trafficking, and that the U.S. government would bring “full force and weight” to solve “the human trafficking epidemic” (Trump 2017).

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley asserted that, “standing up to modern slavery and forced labor is a core element of foreign policy” (Stohl and Dick 2017a).

The U.S. Department of State’s most recent Trafficking in Persons Report (June 2017) ranked every state according to the government’s efforts to stop human trafficking in their respective countries. Each country was evaluated based on how many laws it has enacted to stop human trafficking, and how many criminal penalties it has imposed for these offenses (Trafficking in Persons Report 2017, 25). The report identified countries where children are being recruited as fighters by both state and non-state actors, and offers guidance for prevention of the practice, protection for the victims, and prosecution for the perpetrators. The report demoted Iraq to the Tier 2 Watchlist (Trafficking in Persons Report 2017, 213). It asserted that in 2016, Iraq failed to identify any trafficking victims. Moreover, there are no facilities in Iraq that offer specialized services to trafficking victims, including ISIS child soldiers (Ibid). Syria has maintained its Tier 3 ranking (Ibid, 380). The report states that the Syrian government has “directly contributed to the vulnerability of the population to trafficking and continued to perpetrate human trafficking crimes routinely” (Ibid). It alleges that the actions of the Syrian government have amplified the degree of human trafficking offenses (Ibid, 381). ISIS’ exploitation of children was mentioned in both the Iraq and Syria profiles, detailing ISIS’ use of child soldiers and sex slaves. While it is a step in the right direction to identify and inform, the Trump administration has done little legally and politically to reduce and prevent the usage of child soldiers.

Trump could demonstrate his commitment to stopping the use of child soldiers by revising policies to close loopholes or alter the language within such policies to be more specific. The primary piece of U.S. legislation that addresses child soldiering is The Child Soldiers

Prevention Act of 2008 (CSPA), signed by George W. Bush to pressure foreign governments to stop using child soldiers (Stohl and Dick 2017b). CSPA achieves this by leveraging valuable U.S. military assistance and arms sales to countries that recruit children for armed conflict. Yet, just months after Trump declared his administration's dedication to ending human trafficking, he waived CSPA prohibitions for five of the eight countries identified for using child combatants in government armed forces or government-supported armed groups (Stohl and Dick 2017b). The annual list itself also drew outrage, as it omitted three states with well-known child soldier usage, including Iraq. This decision was made by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, who came under fire for giving a pass to governments that use child soldiers. Experts say this move sends the wrong message to foreign governments, and undermines the Trump administration's ability to reduce the use of child soldiers (Stohl and Dick 2017c). Further, officials responded to Secretary Tillerson's decision by asserting that he was in violation of federal law (Baumgaertner 2017).

The Trump administration is not unique in its failure to hold governments actually accountable for child soldiering. Obama frequently waived CSPA's prohibitions and authorized billions of dollars of military assistance to countries with known child soldier usage (Stohl and Dick 2017b). Experts see the Trump administration as simply carrying on Obama's unfavorable legacy in dealing with child soldiers (Ibid).

IV. ISIS' Preparation for Dabiq and its Aftermath

Anticipation

ISIS has strategic advantages that will serve it well before, during, and after a future conventional battle against the West in Dabiq. Armed insurgent groups that have previously

challenged U.S. forces in the region, such as al-Qaeda in the aftermath of the Iraq war, caused problems for the United States, but were only in their beginning stages of formation. Al-Qaeda and similar groups did not yet have the influence, prestige, or experience that ISIS has today. At the time of the Iraq war, al-Qaeda did not have as many fighters, resources, or supporters, and was split in two political factions. Al-Qaeda was not as united or organized as ISIS is now. Al-Qaeda was also never a state—ISIS is a well-established bureaucratic organization made up of individuals bonded by their loyalty to the Caliphate.

ISIS and al-Qaeda stand in stark contrast to one another on the subject of the Caliphate. Where al-Baghdadi is on an adamant and immediate quest for territory, Osama bin Laden was more focused on attacking Americans. In a 2007 letter from bin Laden to al-Qaeda official Atiyah Abd al-Rahman, bin Laden writes, “You should ask them to avoid insisting on the formation of an Islamic State at the time being, but to work on breaking the power of our main enemy by attacking American embassies... We should stress on the importance of timing in establishing the Islamic State” (Groll and Francis 2015). Bin Laden viewed the Caliphate as an end goal to slowly work towards. Al-Baghdadi wants the state established now. Since ISIS’ vision asserts that the Caliphate will only become global after the West is defeated at Dabiq, it is crucial to al-Baghdadi that this battle happens soon. ISIS is not only prepared, but also excited, to challenge any foreign actor who may launch a large-scale invasion.

War Strategies

If Western forces invade the region, ISIS has an advantage in regard to war tactics, and Western soldiers must be prepared for the conditions they may encounter. ISIS relies heavily on guerilla tactics and asymmetric warfare strategies, such as suicide bombing soft targets (Schmitt

2018). ISIS regularly carries out operations in secrecy, has an extensive network of underground tunnels, and its members are highly skilled in making homemade weapons and explosives. ISIS' youth in particular are well equipped for this struggle, having undergone years of training in anticipation. These talents and assets give ISIS an upper hand if outside forces invade. ISIS has the abilities necessary to fight an underground battle for which the West is ill prepared, due to the intrinsic nature of guerilla fighting. In guerilla warfare, highly flexible inferior units launch unexpected and sudden attacks on superior forces (Faila 2017, 21). It is difficult for conventional armies to prepare to counter such precipitous offenses.

Jeffrey B. White from the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency writes that, in fighting guerilla forces, all conventional armies carry the "ball and chain" of their logistic system (White 2007). He explains that sophisticated mechanized forces do not have much operational flexibility or mobility because they have incredible amounts of fuel and ammunition to carry, creating vulnerabilities that can be easily exploited. White argues that non-conventional forces are less limited by these types of logistical burdens. Instead, their weaponry is light, transportable, and simple enough that if damaged, can be quickly repaired by members of the group (Ibid). While Western armies have incredible force, discipline, and organizational support, rebel fighters do not pursue decisive battles (White 2007). Raids and ambushes draw out the war, slowly bleeding out and tiring Western soldiers who are not experienced or fluent in this type of warfare.

Apart from having the benefit of expert guerilla tactics and fighting on its own turf at Dabiq, ISIS' use of child fighters gives the group another special advantage in combating Western soldiers. Child combatants change the nature of war, and pose distinct challenges for conventional forces. Singer describes child soldiers as some of the most savage fighters in war, and asserts that the younger the child is, the more vicious they tend to be in battle (Singer 2005,

106). He claims that when child soldiers are fighting, wars tend to be bloodier (Ibid, 95). Tynes and Early's global analysis of child soldier use confirmed this hypothesis, finding that when child soldiers were involved in battle, casualty counts were higher (Tynes and Early 2014, 99). In addition, Haer and Böhmelt's data revealed that conflict recurrence was more likely when children were present in war (Haer and Böhmelt 2016, 410). One scholar elaborates, "War children have difficulty turning into peace children and this, itself, may contribute to prolonging conflicts" (Udombana 2006, 71).

Tiefenbrun argues that child fighters add to the chaos of war. She asserts that youth are less attune to the consequences of their actions, and therefore are more likely to violate the laws of war (Tiefenbrun 2007, 431). Because of the disorder their presence causes, child soldiers do not necessarily need to be conventionally operationally effective to challenge enemy combatants. Child soldiers remain a threat in battle by participating in attacks that do not require much skill, such as targeting innocent civilians (Human Rights Watch 2008). Human wave attacks are another war strategy that does not require much military expertise. Inexperienced child soldiers commonly carry out human wave attacks, which are devised to overpower the adversary by sheer numbers (Singer 2005, 107). A large reserve of child soldiers can also benefit armed groups by allowing them to swiftly replace battlefield losses (Bloom, Horgan, and Winter 2016; Singer 2005, 98).

A primary reason why Western soldiers are unprepared for this particular battle is that they will face a moral dilemma when they are forced to choose between shooting a child, or being shot by one. The Western forces who encountered child soldiers on the battlefield in World War II are an example of how fighting children takes a toll on soldiers' resolve. Despite being on the brink of victory, the American units that fought the Hitler Youth in 1945 had the lowest

morale of any U.S. unit during the whole course of the war (Internet Archive 2003). American soldiers reported that they were extremely unsettled fighting children. Similarly, the British soldiers who fought the Hitler Youth had high levels of post-traumatic stress disorder (Ibid). In addition to this personal predicament, the U.S. army would face a public relations quandary if American adult soldiers engaged children in battle. If the U.S. was observed fighting child soldiers, individuals around the world would become enraged, and ISIS supporters could depict these youngsters as martyrs to justify waging jihad (Singer 2003).

Enduring Commitment

Even if the West makes significant gains in this potential future battle, ISIS will still not be obliterated because its ideologically indoctrinated followers will seek to reunite the group. One group of scholars interviewed 63 ISIS defectors and foreign fighters between 2014 and 2017 (Speckhard, Shajkovci, and Yayla 2018). They found that many individuals were not true defectors; the researchers classified these individuals as “Islamic State returnees.” The scholars found that some ISIS “defectors” simply left Syria to return to their home countries and carry out attacks there. Others rejected ISIS for some time, but then rejoined the group after having difficulty reintegrating back into civil society. One foreign ISIS fighter from Kosovo reported, “I am temporarily disengaged. I will return. I have established my life in the Islamic State... Defecting means switching allegiance and commitment. I have not abandoned my brothers and sisters in Syria... I have found a new purpose in life” (R.B., interviewed in March 2016, Kosovo).

ISIS has put a lot of effort into ensuring that if its current leadership is wiped out, the intensely indoctrinated next generation will carry on the message of the Islamic State. Nikita

Malik explains: “Children make great props for a terrorist organisation but the deeper message is that ‘our losses don’t matter because... look at how dangerous these children are’” (Dearden 2017). Umm is a Syrian girl who was indoctrinated by ISIS during her teen years. She was forced into three marriages to ISIS fighters, and ran away out of fear of being forced into a fourth. When Umm spoke to Speckhard, Shajkovci, and Yayla, however, she maintained, “ISIS is a really good group, I have to help them... They are not as bad as people tell. ISIS is good. Women are covered over there... I would do the same thing again if given the opportunity... I want to go back... I will go back and fight with them” (Umm Rasheed, age twenty-one, interviewed in May 2016, Turkey). Umm also disclosed that she invited many women in Raqqa to join ISIS, and shared her enthusiasm about her son – currently a small baby – becoming an ISIS martyr in a few years (Speckhard, Shajkovci, and Yayla 2018).

In 2016, journalist Anthony Loyd interviewed several ISIS child soldiers at a juvenile remand center in Kirkuk, Iraq. One boy he spoke to was Mohammed Ahmed Ismael, described by the wardens as “dangerous and unrepentant” (Loyd 2017). Mohammed is a heavily indoctrinated 15-year-old who was arrested by Iraqi forces in 2016, just seconds before he could detonate his suicide bomb. Mohammed is now awaiting trial with an expected ten-year minimum sentence. Because of his young age, Mohammed will still have some fighting years left in him when he has finished serving his time. Given the strength of his ideological commitment, it is likely that he will retain his devotion to the Islamic State. The governor told Loyd that he was “absolutely sure [Mohammed] would go back to the Daesh the moment he was released” (Ibid). Locking up indoctrinated child combatants will do no good without also providing rehabilitative or de-radicalization programs that will incentivize them not to go back to ISIS and commit more

acts of terror upon return to society. Without these programs, child soldiers will remain a threat and continue to play a central role in ensuring ISIS' survival.

V. Conclusion

In sum, this chapter has not argued for or against any proposed way forward in fighting ISIS. It has instead weighed how ISIS and the United States would approach a potential future war, and how child soldiers would change the nature of the conflict. Even if there is no escalation of ground war, terrorist attacks abroad committed in the name of ISIS will still pose a major threat to global security. The fight against ISIS is not about territory, but ideology, and combating ISIS-inspired violence around the world remains a daunting task. No matter how the United States proceeds with the fight against ISIS, to do so effectively, American soldiers, commanders, and intelligence advisers must understand who ISIS is, where they came from, and what they want. Unfortunately, Westerners have not even begun to understand ISIS and the ideology that inspires hundreds of thousands of individuals around the world to pledge ultimate fidelity to the Caliphate. As Commander of American Special Forces in the Middle East, Major General Michael K. Nagata, confessed: "We have not defeated the idea... We do not even understand the idea" (Schmitt 2014). Until we do, ISIS will not be eradicated, and its young followers will remain committed to waging violent jihad for years to come.

The United States government must proceed carefully, and with tact. ISIS, and its child fighters in particular, are well prepared for the battle we may give them, and receptive to the resulting instability that a U.S. invasion would produce. The next and final chapter will discuss ways to refute the message of the Islamic State that has inspired many youths to take up arms, as well as ways to move ahead in facing the challenges posed by ISIS' child soldiers.

Chapter Five: Hearts and Minds

“There was something else there that lent him the fractured aura of youth: a peculiar absence of adulthood. As if somehow all that should have naturally evolved within his mind during his teenage years – rationale and reason, precepts and the roots of self-belief – were missing. Just the frightful postgraduation of terror remained, so that seated before me he was at once the echo of a lost boy and the whisper of an unformed man.”

--Anthony Loyd describing ISIS child soldier Ali Khatan Abdul Wahab Mahmoud. Mahmoud is currently 21 years old and held at a youth remand center in Kirkuk (Loyd 2017).

I. Introduction

This final chapter discusses ways the United States and our allies can move forward in addressing the challenges faced by ISIS’ child combatants now and for years to come. I take a “hearts and minds” approach to the topic, asserting that an ideological counteroffensive is necessary to confront the intellectual message of the Islamic State that inspires so many young people to commit violent acts in the name of Islam (Brooks 2016). I use a version of the traditional Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) framework (UNDDR 2006) that is tweaked to acknowledge the special role of ideological indoctrination for ISIS’ specific practice of child soldiering, considering Demobilization, De-radicalization and Reintegration. This model better addresses the distinct nature of ISIS’ recruitment of youth: “We are dealing with children who have not just been abducted and given arms to launch attacks, but with children who have been given a cause, an ideology and a very large investment in their education” (Nikita Malik as quoted in Loyd 2017).

II. Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) for Conventional Conflicts

DDR is a multifaceted process that aims to bring about peace, stability, and security in post-conflict environments (UNDDR 2005). It is a process by which ex-combatants are gradually

accepted back into civilian life socially, politically, and economically. The first stage, disarmament, involves confiscating and disposing of weapons. The second step, demobilization, refers to the discharge of active combatants from armed groups. Combatants receive temporary assistance such as food, water and shelter at this stage, and are usually transferred to provisional centers or camps. The last step, reintegration, is a long-term process by which ex-combatants are reintegrated into their communities. They regain their political, economic, and social rights (the right to vote, the right to employment), and are officially considered civilians again.

Reintegration is a fundamentally social process, necessitating the involvement and cooperation of the ex-combatant's family and community (Commission of the African Union 2014, 9).

The majority of DDR programs have been implemented in Africa, directed by the United Nations with the assistance of other non-governmental organizations (Hanson 2007). Results of these programs have been mixed. Most complications arise in the final phase of reintegration, which has been referred to as “the Achilles heel of DDR” (Hanson 2007). For example, DDR in Sierra Leone was successful at disarming and demobilizing over 70,000 combatants, but failed to ensure reintegration, leaving an entire generation of young male ex-combatants unemployed and feeling neglected by the government (Sesay and Suma 2009, 33). Reintegration efforts also fell flat in the Congo, described by Amnesty International as “chaotic and problematic,” with little relief or renewed opportunity for victims of war to begin a new life (Hanson 2007). One Congolese former fighter expressed anger that he risked his life to turn in his gun as part of DDR, and was now unable to feed his family. Resentful and unemployed, he demanded his weapon be returned to him (Ibid). As this man's experience and resulting sentiment demonstrates, an incompetent DDR program is the perfect recipe for inviting renewed conflict and persisting hostilities.

When designing effective DDR programs, one must look closely at the specific nature of the conflict, and the environment in which the armed group operates. Then, the basic framework must be adjusted accordingly. In the case of ISIS, DDR must start before the conflict ends, breaking with the norm in previous cases of waiting until hostilities terminate. Since terrorists do not fight decisive, conventional wars, a post-conflict state will not arise anytime soon. Threats from ISIS will persist indefinitely; making it paramount that DDR programs are established now. In addition to modifying the time frame, I exclude the disarmament phase from my version of DDR because collecting and counting weapons is not a central focus of this process; addressing Cubs' mindsets are far more important. A de-radicalization stage must be added to the traditional framework to heal ISIS' young ex-combatants. De-radicalization programs for this specific class of former soldiers are necessary because of the central role of ideological indoctrination.

It is true that any successful DDR program will require significant funding and sustained foreign assistance, especially with a group as complex as ISIS. The benefits, however, will absolutely outweigh the costs. In 2013, Barack Obama gave a speech at the National Defense University about the future of the United States' fight against terrorism. He emphasized that "foreign assistance cannot be viewed as charity. It is fundamental to our national security, and any sensible long-term strategy to battle extremism." He justified that, "foreign assistance is a tiny fraction of what we spend fighting wars that our assistance might ultimately prevent" (Obama 2013). Obama stressed that continuous diplomatic engagement, effective partnerships, and comprehensive strategies are necessary to counter terrorism and extremist ideologies abroad (Ibid). The version of "DDR" that this thesis proposes – Demobilization, De-radicalization and Reintegration – is inspired by Obama's collaborative and sustained approach.

III. Demobilizing Cubs

Demobilization is defined as, “the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces” (UNDDR 2005). The demobilization stage begins once fighters have been disarmed and transported to safe facilities. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, former child combatants entered a UNICEF transitory care center where they were kept for three months, receiving medical care and psychological counseling (World Health Organization 2006). Teaching life skills and economic independence were key components of the center’s initiatives. DRC children who successfully completed vocational training were gifted with start-up kits, such as carpentry or hairdressing tools, to help them attain employment after they departed the center (Ibid). This facility is a prototypical model of a demobilization center. Official DDR programs for ISIS’ Cubs have not yet been designed, but there are ongoing efforts to demobilize the child soldiers who have escaped ISIS. These practices can be analyzed and evaluated with DDR standards in mind, in anticipation of a formal process in the future.

Government officials in Iraq and Syria are struggling with how to deal with the Cubs. Over the past couple of years, detention facilities in the region have swelled with individuals suspected of having ties to ISIS. Hundreds of these detainees are children, mostly rounded up by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). While it is progress that some of these children have been disarmed and demobilized through this process, there are troubling reports of torture and unlawful detainment in the facilities (Human Rights Watch 2017). A juvenile detention center in Erbil made headlines in 2017, when 17 incarcerated youth alleged abuse and torture at the hands of KRG officials while in lock up (Ibid). The suspected ISIS-involved children, ages 11 to 17, were denied access to lawyers, translators or family members, given electric shocks, put in stress positions and beaten. As is often the case in torture-induced confessions, multiple

youth who were not involved in the fighting and had simply grown up in ISIS-controlled territory told Human Rights Watch that they made false admissions of attending Cub training camps just to stop the physical torment. Some children reported that they were forced into signing documents in languages that they could not read, only to find out later that they had signed off on a guilty confession (Ibid). The legal basis on which these children are held is unclear, and KRG officials have not clarified if any of the youngsters have actual criminal charges filed against them.

The utility of these facilities is questionable, to say the least. When journalist Anthony Loyd visited a youth remand center in Kirkuk, he noted that there were no rehabilitative programs at the facility to address the mentalities of the Cubs detained there (Loyd 2017). Because of the alleged torture at the centers in Erbil and Dohuk, one can likely assume no effective rehabilitation programs are underway there either. A staff member at the Women and Children's Reformatory in Erbil confirmed this, reporting that the psychological support staff at the Reformatory consists of one psychologist who visits once a week, and mostly supplies medication. The detention center is horribly overcrowded, packed to six times its designated capacity (Human Rights Watch 2017).

As noted, arresting and detaining ISIS-affiliated youth does indeed serve to demobilize them, since this procedure adheres to the definition of separating soldiers from their commanders. However, the KRG jails described above are not demobilization centers per se, because they are not temporary establishments with the eventual goal of moving the child towards rehabilitation and reintegration. Instead, the sole purpose is to punish. Fully demobilizing ISIS' child soldiers will require special facilities that do much more than locking them up. Effective demobilization centers demand a dedicated and well-meaning staff as well as

an open-door policy for psychiatrists, lawyers, translators and family members. Transparency, accountability and oversight by third parties will be required for these operations to run smoothly and be successful.

IV. De-radicalizing Cubs

Radicalization refers to, “a process whereby individuals (and even groups) develop, over time, a mindset that can—under the right circumstances and opportunities—increase the risk that he or she will engage in violent extremism or terrorism” (Clutterbuck 2015). *De-radicalization* thus refers to methods used to challenge and reverse radicalization with the goal of reducing the risk of terrorism (Ibid). De-radicalization involves change at a cognitive level, not only a modification of observable behavior (Horgan and Braddock 2010, 280). One way de-radicalization can be achieved is through education. So-called “de-radicalization schools” exist in the United States, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, and are a response to the ideological indoctrination of youth by jihadist groups.

In Indonesia, there are an estimated 3,000 children of terrorists (VICE 2018). Children of terrorists or violent extremists pose a danger to public security because they are often pressed into committing violent acts. The last chapter told the story of Umm Rasheed, who was quoted as saying: “I want my child to be an ISIS fighter and martyr... Martyrdom is the most important rank you can reach” (Speckhard, Shajkovci, and Yayla 2018). One man, Khairul Ghazali, recognized the magnitude of this problem and opened a de-radicalization school to change the mindsets of children who grew up with radicalized views. Ghazali is a convicted terrorist and admitted that he used to “brainwash” children in jihad (VICE 2018). Ghazali’s background gives him a unique vantage point. Having administered the ideological indoctrination process himself,

he is the perfect person to reverse it. Ghazali believes that framing the way Islam is taught is key to changing children's minds about waging jihad. He explains that the children enter his school full of hate, and he teaches them that Islam is not about hate. The Indonesian government has recognized Ghazali's program as a major success. The government gave him money for land to construct new buildings, as well as a new Mosque. In a VICE News episode, a smiling Ghazali exhibits a large poster, proudly showing off an extensive floor plan for the expanded school. The next school year, 2019, will have triple the number of students and include girls for the first time.

In Pakistan, ideological retraining and vocational training programs are underway to rehabilitate child soldiers of the Taliban. In 2013 and 2014, John Horgan traveled to Pakistan to learn about these de-radicalization and reintegration programs, which are run inside of prisons where Islamic militants are held. After spending two years in Pakistan, Horgan reported that he had witnessed remarkable progress, and that the initiatives have the potential to be tremendously effective. Horgan's observations reveal that de-radicalization programs can indeed work inside of jails, which will be necessary for some of ISIS' young militants (Horgan 2015). The reality is that, while some youth ex-combatants may be ready and eager to return to civilian life, others may need to be held in high security facilities. Nonetheless, with the right staff and administrators, children can receive the psychosocial support they need for life after incarceration.

In ISIS' process of ideological indoctrination, Cubs are groomed to believe that Islam promotes violence. Therefore, religion is paramount to acknowledge in de-radicalization efforts to normalize Cubs. Religion is a positive force for many people, especially those seeking guidance, forgiveness, and acceptance. Reshaping what it means to be a devout Muslim should be central in the de-radicalization phase. As outsiders who lack full understanding of Islam, as

well as ISIS' extremist twist on it, the role of Westerners must be relatively limited in regard to involvement with these de-radicalization programs. For a conversation of sensitive nature, the messenger is as important as the message. Our best hope for reaching radicalized individuals is former extremists like Ghazali. ISIS claims that secular and moderate groups try to mislead and deceive true believers, so if a moderate Muslim or secular figure was to lead the dialogue, they may not be as persuasive to the target audience (McMurtry 2015; Benotman and Malik 2016, 66).

A feasible task that the West could take on is financially supporting these programs and schools. It is in the West's best interest for security to allocate funds to this process. Since the West is ISIS' primary stated enemy, government officials as well as ordinary civilians should see it as vital that we support direct efforts to counter the radical extremist ideology that rouses many to commit violent acts against us.

V. Reintegrating Cubs

Reintegration in Child DDR is defined by the Paris Principles as, “the process through which children transition into civil society and enter meaningful roles and identities as civilians who are accepted by their families and communities in a context of local and national reconciliation” (Paris Principles 2007). The definition states that successful reintegration is accomplished when, “the political, legal, economic and social conditions needed for children to maintain life, livelihood and dignity have been secured” (Paris Principles 2007). Many of the United Nation's reintegration programs focus heavily on the economic aspect, and UNICEF has recommended that this portion of reintegration be bolstered even more (Ensor 2013, 159). The

emphasis on financial stability stems from the belief of some experts who view the ultimate end goal of DDR as finding sustainable employment (Republic of South Sudan 2011, 10).

Formerly ISIS-affiliated youth have a long road ahead to eventual reintegration. Entering the workforce is a far off prospect for ideologically indoctrinated youngsters who have a lack of transferable skills to civil society, since all they have been taught is the Quran and how to kill. In ISIS-run schools, classes like philosophy, social studies, and art are not part of the curriculum, as the Islamic State considers these studies the “methodology of atheism” (Townsend 2016). Without a basic foundation of general knowledge, Cubs have limited options for employment, which hinders their ability to support a family and contribute to society. This reality has far-reaching effects on the country as a whole: Blattman and Annan found that when children are conscripted into rebel groups, schooling falls by a year, employment rates drop by fifty percent, and earnings decrease by thirty percent. These damages to human capital could hinder a nation’s productivity, stability and growth for years to come (Blattman and Annan 2010).

Ghazali noted that his students enter the school filled with hate for the “system” and their country, as a result of radicalization. Therefore, the mentalities of these children must be addressed before they can be tasked with finding a source of livelihood. Reintegrating back into an outside world that Cubs have been trained to despise is dangerous, and if done wrong, can have disastrous consequences: when returning children feel neglected by their communities, they tend to seek out their old commanders (American Institutes for Research 2007, 3). Given the risk of recidivism, the de-radicalization phase must be successful and carried to completion before any sort of reintegration begins. Middle East regional advocacy director for Save the Children, Misty Buswell, spoke to many Cubs and kids who grew up in areas under ISIS control while doing research on what to do about the Islamic State’s young combatants. She unsurprisingly

found that the demobilized kids remained traumatized, feeling numb to their emotions and having violent nightmares. She described them as, “completely shut down,” and “not really able to think about their futures” (Omar and Smith 2017). Tamara Kummer, a spokeswoman for UNICEF, recently asserted that it was too soon to begin the conversation about normalizing these youth (Ibid). Mia Bloom disagrees, arguing that the international community must begin designing rehabilitation programs for these kids immediately. She acknowledges that this will be an immense challenge, requiring a novel level of coordination and creativity, but that we have no choice but to start now (Bloom 2015).

In addition to psychological hurdles, logistical obstacles also stand in the way of former ISIS child soldiers reintegrating back into their communities. To begin with, some communities may not even exist anymore, due to the devastating destruction caused by ISIS and the fight against ISIS in the region. Moreover, numerous ISIS youth were enrolled in Cub training camps by their parents, who may also have radical beliefs. DDR programs usually prioritize reuniting children with their families, but since it is often the parents that encouraged their children to join ISIS in the first place, many former Cubs will not be able to return to their families (Bloom 2015).

Another complication is how community members will perceive these children. Ordinary civilians who fear ISIS will be frightful of returning Cubs, and girls who have been raped by ISIS may face stigma from their communities. In Nepal and the DRC, returning boys were greeted with open arms while girls were met with wariness as community members viewed them as sexually promiscuous (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers 2009, 9). Women and girls are almost never included in DDR programs, although Security Council Resolution 1325 aims to change this, establishing that women must be involved in the peace building process post-

conflict (UNDDDR 2006, 1). The inclusion of females in DDR is necessary in any armed conflict, for they too have suffered and deserve the opportunity to safely reintegrate back into society. In the Islamic State, girls occupy a special role. They are known as the “pearls of the caliphate,” and take care of the men (Townsend 2016). Girls are crucial in ensuring the survival of ISIS because they give birth to next generation of fighters. Therefore, DDR needs to include programs tailored specifically to the experiences of girls in the Islamic State as well. In sum, it is essential that the United States and other international actors understand that ISIS and its campaign of indiscriminate violence will persist until each and every Cub—girl or boy—is successfully demobilized, de-radicalized and reintegrated back into civil society.

VI. Conclusion

Child soldiering is one of the worst forms of child labor and a glaring desecration of both international and Islamic law. Through Demobilization, De-radicalization, and Reintegration, there is hope for the Cubs of the Caliphate to escape ISIS, re-discover their faith and personal values, and become productive members of society. DDR or similar multi-pronged programs designed to rehabilitate former child soldiers must be context-specific and sustained, for a long road to healing lies ahead.

As ISIS continues to languish under military pressure from foreign actors, its rallying cry that the West is hostile to Islam persists around the world. It remains inside the hearts and minds of Cubs and former Cubs in Iraq and Syria who have been manipulated and maltreated by this horrible group. By financially supporting local educators, Arab political leaders, Islamic experts and independent Muslim clerics in Iraq and Syria, the United States and the international

community as a whole can help combat the message of ISIS and broadcast a new, nonviolent message that refutes that of the Islamic State.

This thesis has demonstrated how ISIS has planted the seeds for future insurgency by recruiting youth, and by ideologically indoctrinating them, has lit a malicious spark of hate that will continue to burn brightly until a de-radicalization program successfully extinguishes it. The threat that active Cubs pose cannot be underestimated. Sherri Talabany, former U.S. diplomat and founder of an NGO that helps victims of ISIS, explains: “If we have this whole generation untreated and suffering from these traumatic events... We’re just going to be prone to another wave and cycle of ISIS or Al Qaeda 3.0” (D’Agata 2017).

While ISIS has suffered serious territorial losses in Iraq and Syria, the group has already advanced into Africa and South Asia (Snow 2018). Areas in the Middle East, South and East Asia and North Africa that are ungoverned or fraught with sectarian tensions provide the next generation of ISIS with the perfect opportunity to reinstate itself as a dominant group (Ibid). The powerful magnetism of ISIS’ ideology coupled with regional instability is a dangerous recipe for future terrorist violence. Add matured Cubs to this equation, and we can see exactly why ISIS is recruiting child soldiers. Neither territorial nor battlefield losses matter in the end for ISIS; its ferocious youngsters have been set up perfectly to thrive in unstable environments and continue waging jihad. Before he was killed, Islamic State spokesman Abū Muhammad Al-‘Adnānī ash-Shāmī addressed the setbacks in Mosul and Raqqa, responding to claims of the group’s defeat: “No: defeat is losing the will and the desire to fight” (Lister 2017). Indeed, in this battle of ideologies, there may never be defeat.

References

- "4 out of 10 child soldiers are girls - Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth." United Nations. Accessed February 17, 2018. <http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2015/02/4-10-child-soldiers-girls/>.
- Abdelkader, Engy. "The Origins, Evolution, and Impact of the Term "Radical Islam"." Penn Law. October 29, 2016. Accessed April 02, 2018. <https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/news/6593-the-origins-evolution-and-impact-of-the-term/news/international-blog.php>.
- "Abducted and Abused: Renewed Conflict in Northern Uganda," Human Rights Watch, 15 July 2003, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/07/14/abducted-and-abused>.
- "About Iraq." UNDP in Iraq. Accessed January 16, 2018. <http://www.iq.undp.org/content/iraq/en/home/countryinfo.html>.
- Abū Hamza al-Muhājir, "al-Liqā' al-sawtī al-awwal ma' al-shaykh Abī Hamza al-Muhājir," Mu'assasat al-Furqān, 24 October 2008. Transcript in Majmū', 181–190.
- Abū Muhammad al-'Adnānī, "Innamā a'ih. ukum bi-wāh. ida," Mu'assasat al-Furqān, 21 May 2012. Transcript: <https://ia600605.us.archive.org/7/items/enma.a3ezakom/waheda.pdf>
- "Afghanistan: Taliban Child Soldier Recruitment Surges." Human Rights Watch. February 16, 2016. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/02/17/afghanistan-taliban-child-soldier-recruitment-surges>
- African Union Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Capacity Program: National DDR Frameworks - Operational Guideline. Guideline. 2014. Accessed March 9, 2018. <http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/au-operational-guidance-note-on-national-frameworks.pdf>.
- Al-'Adnānī ash-Shāmī, Shaykh Abū Muhammad. "Indeed Your Lord Is Ever Watchful." Speech, September 9, 2014. Accessed January 8, 2018. <https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/bitstream/handle/10066/16495/ADN20140922.pdf>
- Al-'Adnānī ash-Shāmī, Shaykh Abū Muhammad. "They Shall by No Means Harm You But With a Slight Evil." Speech, August 2013. 2013. Accessed January 8, 2018. https://archive.org/stream/AlAdnaniMayAllahBeWithYouOOppressedState/Al-Adnani-%20They%20Shall%20by%20no%20means%20Harm%20you_djvu.txt

- Alexandre J. Vautravers; Why Child Soldiers are Such a Complex Issue, *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, Volume 27, Issue 4, 1 December 2008, Pages 96-107, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdp002>
- Alfred, Charlotte. "A Shocking Number Of Kids Are Fighting And Dying For ISIS." The Huffington Post, February 19, 2016. Accessed January 19, 2018. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/isis-child-soldiers_us_56c779b9e4b0ec6725e28d90.
- Allan R. Millett and Williamson Murray and Kenneth H. Watman. "The Effectiveness of Military Organizations." *International Security* 11, no. 1 (1986): 37-71. <https://muse.jhu.edu/> (Accessed December 7, 2017).
- Allen-Ebrahimian, Bethany. "Boko Haram Has Forced 117 Children to Act as Suicide Bombers." *Foreign Policy*, April 12, 2017.
- American Morning*, CNN, Transcript, May 10, 2002.
- Ayer, Eleanor H., Helen Waterford, and Alfons Heck. *Parallel Journeys*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1995.
- Baumgaertner, Emily. "Tillerson Accused of Violating Federal Law on Child Soldiers." The New York Times, November 21, 2017. Accessed February 11, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/21/us/politics/tillerson-child-soldiers.html>.
- Beber, Bernd, and Christopher Blattman. "The Logic of Child Soldiering and Coercion." *International Organization* 67 no. 1 (January 2013): 65-104.
- Benotman, Noman, and Nikita Malik. "Quilliam Releases Report on Children in the Caliphate." Quilliam - Promoting Pluralism & Inspiring Change. March 7, 2016. Accessed January 16, 2018. <https://www.quilliaminternational.com/quilliam-releases-report-on-children-in-the-caliphate/>.
- Benotman, Noman, and Nikita Malik. "Children in the Caliphate." Quilliam. March 2016. Accessed January 16, 2018. <https://f.hypotheses.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/2725/files/2016/04/the-children-of-islamic-state.pdf>
- Blattman, Christopher, and Jeannie Annan. "The Consequences of Child Soldiering." *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 92, no. 4 (November 2010): 882-98.
- Bloom, Mia. "Cubs of the Caliphate." *Foreign Affairs*, July 21, 2015. Accessed March 14, 2018. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2015-07-21/cubs-caliphate>.
- Bloom, Mia, John Horgan, and Charlie Winter. "Depictions of Children and Youth in the Islamic State's Martyrdom Propaganda, 2015-2016." *CTC Sentinel* 9 (February):

29-32. <https://ctc.usma.edu/depictions-of-children-and-youth-in-the-islamic-states-martyrdom-propaganda-2015-2016/>

Boghani, Priyanka. "Why Afghanistan's Children Are Used as Spies and Suicide Bombers." PBS. November 17, 2015. Accessed December 03, 2017. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/why-afghanistans-children-are-used-as-spies-and-suicide-bombers/>.

"Boko Haram Fast Facts." CNN. September 18, 2017. Accessed December 06, 2017. <http://www.cnn.com/2014/06/09/world/boko-haram-fast-facts/index.html>.

Brandenberger, David. *Propaganda State in Crisis: Soviet Ideology, Indoctrination, and Terror Under Stalin, 1927-1941*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.

Brett, Rachel, and Irma Specht. *Young Soldiers: Why They Choose to Fight*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004.

Briggs, Jimmie. *Innocents Lost: When Child Soldiers Go to War*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2005.

Brooks, David. "War of Ideology." *The New York Times*, July 24, 2004. Accessed January 16, 2018. <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/07/24/opinion/war-of-ideology.html>.

Cakaj, Ledio. "Joseph Kony and Mutiny in the Lord's Resistance Army." *The New Yorker*, October 3, 2015.

Carter, Sara. "ISIS Expanding Training Camps, Recruiting Children." *U.S. News*, February 12, 2016. Accessed January 19, 2018. <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2016-02-12/isis-expanding-training-camps-recruiting-children>.

Chatterjee, Siddharth. "For Child Soldiers, Every Day Is A Living Nightmare." *Forbes*. December 10, 2012. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2012/12/09/for-child-soldiers-every-day-is-a-living-nightmare/#69f77cd027bd>

"Child Recruitment and Use." Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/effects-of-conflict/six-grave-violations/child-soldiers/>

Child Soldiers: Prevention, Demobilization and Reintegration. Report. May 2002. Accessed March 10, 2018. https://www.unicef.org/wcaro/ChildSoldiers_CPR_Unit_Soc_Dev_Dept_World_Bank_May_2002.pdf.

"Child Soldiers." Human Rights Watch. Accessed February 17, 2018.
<https://www.hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights/child-soldiers>.

Child Soldiers International. "Where are child soldiers?" Child Soldiers International, August 11, 2017. Accessed November 12, 2017. <https://www.child-soldiers.org/where-are-there-child-soldiers>

"Child Soldiers." International Labour Organization. February 13, 2003. Accessed December 06, 2017. http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/multimedia/video/video-news-releases/WCMS_074511/lang--en/index.htm

Child Soldiers. Issue brief. August 2012. Accessed February 17, 2018.
<https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc-002-0824.pdf>.

"Child Soldiers," Radio Netherlands, January 21, 2000,
www2.rnw.nl/rnw/en/features/humanrights/childsoldiers.html.

Children and Armed Conflict, UN General Assembly Security Council, 70th session, Agenda item 68, UN Doc A/70/836-S/2016/360 (20 April 2016) para 9.

"Children at Both Ends of the Gun." UNICEF. Accessed December 06, 2017.
<https://www.unicef.org/graca/kidsoldi.htm>.

Children and DDR. Module. August 2006. Accessed March 9, 2018.
<http://unddr.org/uploads/documents/IDDRS%205.30%20Children%20and%20DDR.pdf>.

Clutterbuck, Lindsay. "Deradicalization Programs and Counterterrorism: A Perspective on the Challenges and Benefits." Middle East Institute. June 10, 2015. Accessed March 10, 2018.
http://www.mei.edu/content/deradicalization-programs-and-counterterrorism-perspective-challenges-and-benefits#_ftn17.

"Coercion and Intimidation of Child Soldiers to Participate in Violence." Human Rights Watch. April 16, 2008. Accessed December 06, 2017.
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2008/04/16/coercion-and-intimidation-child-soldiers-participate-violence>

"Coercion vs. Persuasion." Metta Center. August 16, 2014. Accessed February 01, 2018.
<https://mettacenter.org/definitions/gloss-concepts/coercion-vs-persuasion/>.

Council on Foreign Relations. "Background Briefing: What is the Islamic State?" *PBS News Hour*, November 16, 2015. Accessed October 20, 2017.
<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/what-is-islamic-state-iraq-and-syria>

Cousins, Sophie. "Child Soldiers Fight Against Islamic State in Syria." USA Today. November 16, 2014. Accessed October 17, 2017.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/11/16/kurds-child-soldiers/18706053/>

Costache, Ruxandra I. Girl Children Soldiers: Potential Need for an Increased Protection Under the International Law of Human Rights and the International Humanitarian Law. Human Rights Center of the University of Bucharest. http://drept.unibuc.ro/dyn_doc/cercetare/cdo-Costache.pdf

Cowburn, Ashley. "Isis's Unborn Army: Thousands of Women Being Used to Breed 'Next Generation of Terrorist'." *The Independent*. March 07, 2016. Accessed January 16, 2018. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/over-31000-women-are-currently-pregnant-within-the-so-called-islamic-state-new-report-reveals-a6916756.html>.

Crimi, Frank. "Al-Qaeda's Child Soldiers." *Frontpage Mag*, November 22, 2012.

D'Agata, Charlie. "How ISIS-trained child soldiers are a ticking time bomb." *CBS News*. July 29, 2017. Accessed March 09, 2018. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/isis-trained-child-soldiers-cbsn-on-assignment/>.

Dearden, Lizzie. "Isis uses 10-year-old American boy to issue threat to Donald Trump: The battle will end in your lands'." *The Independent*. August 25, 2017. Accessed February 11, 2018. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/isis-american-boy-trump-video-threat-10-yusuf-raqqa-islamic-state-isil-propaganda-abuse-brainwashing-a7913376.html>.

Eck, Kristine. "Coercion in Rebel Recruitment." *Security Studies* 23, no. 2 (2014): 364-98. Accessed December 6, 2017. doi:10.1080/09636412.2014.905368.

Ensor, Marisa O. "Participation under Fire: Dilemmas of Reintegrating Child Soldiers Involved in South Sudan's Armed Conflict." *Global Studies of Childhood* 3, no. 2 (January 1, 2013): 153-62. Accessed March 10, 2018. doi:<https://doi.org/10.2304/gsch.2013.3.2.153>.

Faila, Brendan P. *ISIS the Governor: Strategies of Urban Control and its Sustainability*. Undergraduate thesis, University of Michigan, 2017.

Faris R. Kirkland PhD, "Honor, Combat Ethics and Military Culture" in *Military Medical Ethics*. 2003. Volume 1, p. 159. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e6be/04f7ed425b50e339344882896c672ae8c5fa.pdf>

Faulkner, Christopher M. "Money and Control: Rebel Groups and the Forcible Recruitment of Child Soldiers." *African Security* 9, no. 1 (July 2016): 211-36.

- Filkins, Dexter. "Did George W. Bush Create ISIS?" *The New Yorker*, May 15, 2015. Accessed January 29, 2018. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/did-george-w-bush-create-isis>.
- Flynn, Michael. "Ex-US Intelligence Chief on Islamic State's Rise." Interview by Matthias Gebauer and Holger Stark. *Spiegel Online*. November 29, 2015. Accessed January 29, 2018. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/former-us-intelligence-chief-discusses-development-of-is-a-1065131.html>.
- "Former LRA Child Soldier Dominic Ongwen and the Quest for Justice." *BBC News*. December 06, 2016. Accessed December 06, 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-38207086>
- Fox, Elizabeth (2017) "Rebuilding Germany's Children: The Nazi Indoctrination and Postwar Reeducation of the Hitler Youth," *Furman Humanities Review*: Vol. 27 , Article 4. Available at: <http://scholarexchange.furman.edu/fhr/vol27/iss1/4>
- Fox, Mary-Jane. "Girl Soldiers: Human Security and Gendered Insecurity." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 4 (December 2004): 465-79. Accessed December 6, 2017. doi:10.1177/0967010604049523.
- "Full text of "Hitler Youth - U.S. Intelligence Files and Photos"." *Internet Archive*. May & June 2003. Accessed February 21, 2018. https://archive.org/stream/HitlerYouth/Military%20Review%20-%20Fighting%20Child%20Soldiers_djvu.txt.
- Gabriel, Richard A., and Paul L. Savage. *Crisis in Command: Mismanagement in the Army*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1978.
- Gerhard Rempel, *Hitler's Children: The Hitler Youth and the SS* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 1.
- Graham, John. "Defeating ISIS: The Military and Economic Options." *The Huffington Post*. May 2, 2016. Accessed January 28, 2018. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-graham/defeating-isis-the-military_b_9817828.html.
- Gramer, Robbie. "J is for Jihad: How The Islamic State Indoctrinates Children With Math, Grammar, Tanks, and Guns." *Foreign Policy*, February 16, 2017. Accessed January 19, 2018. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/16/j-is-for-jihad-how-isis-indoctrinates-kids-with-math-grammar-tanks-and-guns/>.
- Gregory, Michael. "Child Soldiers on Front Lines of Congo Conflict." *CBC News*. November 22, 2012. Accessed January 16, 2018. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/child-soldiers-on-front-lines-of-congo-conflict-1.1174894>

- Groll, Elias, and David Francis. "Osama bin Laden Would Not Have Taken Ramadi." *Foreign Policy*, May 20, 2015. Accessed February 21, 2018. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/05/20/osama-bin-laden-would-not-have-taken-ramadi/>.
- Haer, Roos, and Tobias Böhmelt. "Child soldiers as time bombs? Adolescents' participation in rebel groups and the recurrence of armed conflict." *European Journal of International Relations* 22, no. 2 (2016): 408-36. Accessed February 20, 2018. doi:10.1177/1354066115581910.
- Haer, Roos, and Tobias Böhmelt. "The Impact of Child Soldiers on Rebel Groups' Fighting Capacities." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 33, no. 2 (February 24, 2015): 153-73.
- Hager, Emily B., and Mark Mazzetti. "Emirates Secretly Sends Colombian Mercenaries to Yemen Fight." *The New York Times*, November 25, 2015. Accessed December 27, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/26/world/middleeast/emirates-secretly-sends-colombian-mercenaries-to-fight-in-yemen.html?_r=1
- Hanson, Stephanie. "Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) in Africa." Council on Foreign Relations. February 15, 2007. Accessed March 09, 2018. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/disarmament-demobilization-and-reintegration-ddr-africa>.
- He Made Me Alive With His Blood*, Video. May 29, 2017. Deir Ez-Zor. <https://clarionproject.org/warning-graphic-video-isis-children-4/>
- "Healing Child Soldiers." World Health Organization. May 2009. Accessed March 09, 2018. <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/87/5/09-020509/en/>.
- Heil Hitler: Confessions of a Hitler Youth*, VHS (New York: Ambrose Video Publishing, 1991).
- Hermann Rauschning, *Hitler Speaks: A Series of Political Conversations with Adolf Hitler on His Real Aims* (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1939), 246–47.
- "Hitler Youth." The History Place. 1999. Accessed January 22, 2018. <http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/hitleryouth/hj-boy-soldiers.htm>.
- Horgan, John G. "De-radicalization programs offer hope in countering terrorism." *Los Angeles Times*, February 13, 2015. Accessed March 9, 2018. <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-0215-horgan-terrorist-deradicalization-20150215-story.html>.

- Horgan, John, and Kurt Braddock. 2010. "Rehabilitation the Terrorists: Challenges in Assessing the Effectiveness of De-radicalization Programs." *Terrorism and Political Violence* (March): 267-291.
www.start.umd.edu/start/publications/Derad.pdf
- Houry, Nadim. "Children of the Caliphate." Human Rights Watch. November 23, 2016. Accessed January 16, 2018. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/11/23/children-caliphate>.
- Human Rights Watch Interview with Martin P., Gulu, Uganda, February 6, 2003.
- Human Rights Watch Interview with Edward T., Gulu, Uganda, February 8, 2003.
- Hussein, Rikar, Sirwan Kaijo, and Noor Zahid. "With its Caliphate Faltering, Islamic State Rushes to Indoctrinate Children." *VOA News*, June 20, 2016. Accessed October 17, 2017. <https://www.voanews.com/a/islamic-state-indoctrinating-children/3382184.html>
- "ILO Concern: The Unbearable Fate of Child Soldiers." International Labour Organization. May 23, 2003. Accessed December 06, 2017.
http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/features/WCMS_075611/lang-en/index.htm
- "Indoctrinating Youth." United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Accessed February 01, 2018. <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007820>.
- International Labour Organization (2003). *Wounded Childhood: The Use of Children in Armed Conflict in Central Africa*. Geneva.
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/@emp_ent/@ifp_crisis/documents/publication/wcms_116566.pdf
- "International Laws and Child Rights." Child Soldiers International. Accessed December 03, 2017. <https://www.childsoldiers.org/international-laws-and-child-rights>.
- "Iraq." GALLUP News. Accessed January 28, 2018.
<http://news.gallup.com/poll/1633/iraq.aspx>.
- "ISIS Fast Facts." CNN. December 12, 2017. Accessed March 23, 2018.
<https://www.cnn.com/2014/08/08/world/isis-fast-facts/index.html>.
- "Islamic State Territory Down 60 Percent and Revenue Down 80 Percent on Caliphate's Third Anniversary, IHS Markit Says." IHS Markit. June 29, 2017. Accessed January 28, 2018. <http://news.ihsmarkit.com/press-release/aerospace-defense-security/islamic-state-territory-down-60-percent-and-revenue-down-80>.

- Jawad Al-Tamini, Aymenn. "The Islamic State's Regional Strategy." *European Council on Foreign Relations*, October 2, 2014. Accessed October 7, 2017. http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_the_islamic_states_regional_strategy326
- Kabbani, Shaykh Muhammad Hisham, and Shaykh Seraj Hendricks. "Jihad: A Misunderstood Concept From Islam." The Islamic Supreme Council of America. Accessed January 10, 2018. <http://islamicsupremecouncil.org/understanding-islam/legal-rulings/5-jihad-a-misunderstood-concept-from-islam.html?start=9>.
- Karam, Zeina, and Bram Janssen. "In an IS Training Camp, Children Told: Behead the Doll." *AP News*, July 20, 2015. Accessed October 17, 2017. <https://apnews.com/fcc0fe9b92bb49a2a5bc0f3bd401cc13/training-camp-children-told-behead-doll>
- Kennedy, Hugh. "How ISIS Twisted the Meaning of 'Caliphate'." *Time Magazine*, October 11, 2016. Accessed January 19, 2018. <http://time.com/4471463/caliphate-history/>.
- Komar, Rao, Christian Borys, and Eric Woods. "The Blackwater of Jihad." *Foreign Policy*, February 10, 2017.
- "KRG: Children Allege Torture by Security Forces." Human Rights Watch. January 29, 2017. Accessed March 10, 2018. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/01/29/krq-children-allege-torture-security-forces>.
- Kydd, Andrew H., and Barbara F. Walter. "The Strategies of Terrorism." *International Security* 31, no. 1 (2006). Accessed December 3, 2017. https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/files/publication/is3101_pp049-080_kydd_walter.pdf
- "Letter from al-Zawahiri to al-Zarqawi." Al-Zawahiri to Al-Zarqawi. July 9, 2005. *Global Security*, 2005. Contents released by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.
- "Life for German Youth in the 1930s: Education, Propaganda, Conformity, and Obedience." *Facing History and Ourselves*. Accessed January 16, 2018. <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/decision-making-times-injustice/life-german-youth-1930s-education-propaganda-conformity-obedience>.
- Lister, Tim. "Where does ISIS go after Mosul?" *CNN*. July 10, 2017. Accessed March 12, 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2017/07/10/middleeast/isis-after-mosul/index.html>.
- Logan, Lara. "Child Suicide Bombers." *CBS News*. May 17, 2015. Accessed February 17, 2018. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/child-suicide-bombers-lara-logan-60-minutes/>

"Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)." Global Security. December 15, 2016. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/lra.htm>.

Loyd, Anthony. "The Children of Islamic State." The Times, January 21, 2017. Accessed February 20, 2018. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/magazine/the-times-magazine/the-children-of-islamic-state-0ldjj6l8t>.

"'Maybe We Live and Maybe We Die' Recruitment and Use of Children by Armed Groups in Syria." Human Rights Watch, 2014. Accessed October 17, 2017. https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/syria0614_crd_ForUpload.pdf

Markey, Patrick. "In Iraq, Nigeria and now Turkey, child bombers strike." Reuters. August 22, 2016. Accessed February 17, 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-bombers/in-iraq-nigeria-and-now-turkey-child-bombers-strike-idUSKCN10X25K>.

Mattis, James N. "Remarks by Secretary Mattis on the National Defense Strategy." Speech, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Washington D.C., January 19, 2018. Accessed January 28, 2018. <https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/1420042/remarks-by-secretary-mattis-on-the-national-defense-strategy/>.

McLaughlin, Erin. "How ISIS Recruits Children, Then Kills Them." *CNN*. February 22, 2016. Accessed October 19, 2017. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/19/middleeast/isis-child-soldiers/index.html>

McMurtry, Alyssa. "What the Nazi era can teach us about deradicalizing extremists." CBC News. March 22, 2015. Accessed March 12, 2018. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/what-the-nazi-era-can-teach-us-about-deradicalizing-extremists-1.2982147>.

Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism. Report. 4th ed. Institute for Economics and Peace. Accessed October 17, 2017. <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2016.2.pdf>

Mermet, Joël, and Françoise Jaffré. "The Use of Children as Soldiers in Africa." ReliefWeb. February 1999. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/C157333FCA91F573C1256C130033E448-chilsold.htm>

Michael O. Wheeler, "Loyalty, Honor and the Modern Military" in *War, Morality and the Military Profession*, ed. Malham M. Wakin (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986, pp. 171-179.

- Miller, Aaron M. *The Duality of the Hitler Youth: Ideological Indoctrination and Premilitary Education*. Master's thesis, University of North Texas, 2016. Denton: University of North Texas, 2016.
- "Nigeria: UN Report Details 'Grave Violations' Against Children by Boko Haram." Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. May 4, 2017. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/nigeria-un-report-details-grave-violations-against-children-by-boko-haram/>
- "Nigeria." UNICEF Nigeria - Media centre - Lake Chad conflict: alarming surge in number of children used in Boko Haram bomb attacks this year – UNICEF. April 12, 2017. Accessed February 17, 2018. https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/media_11458.html.
- Omar, Ammar Cheikh, Cassandra Vinograd, and Ghazi Balkiz. "ISIS Trains Child Soldiers at Camps for 'Cubs of the Islamic State'." NBC News. November 07, 2014. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-uncovered/isis-trains-child-soldiers-camps-cubs-islamic-state-n241821>.
- Omar, Ammar Cheikh, and Saphora Smith. "Generation ISIS: When Children Are Taught to Be Terrorists." NBC News. October 21, 2017. Accessed March 10, 2018. <https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-uncovered/generation-isis-when-children-are-taught-be-terrorists-n812201>.
- NsonguruaJ. Udombana, War is Not Child's Play! *International Law and the Prohibition of Children's Involvement in Armed Conflicts*, 20 TEMP. INT'L & COMP. L.J. 57 (2006).
- Otten, Cathy. "Slaves of ISIS: The Long Walk of the Yazidi Women." *The Guardian*, July 25, 2017. Accessed January 22, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/25/slaves-of-isis-the-long-walk-of-the-yazidi-women>.
- Qiu, Linda. "In Davos Speech, Trump Mixes Facts With Fiction." *The New York Times*, January 26, 2018. Accessed January 28, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/26/us/politics/trump-davos-speech-fact-check.html>.
- Release and reintegration of child soldiers: One part of a bigger puzzle. Technical paper. October 2009. Accessed March 10, 2018. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/3908A376D05C25E24925769700255513-Full_Report.pdf.

Republic of South Sudan (2011) Policy Paper on Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration. Final Copy, 23rd September 2011.

Riddle, Lincoln. "Werwolf: The Nazi Resistance Force." War History Online. September 23, 2017. Accessed January 28, 2018. <https://www.warhistoryonline.com/instant-articles/werewolf-nazi-resistance-force.html>

Role of Education and the Demobilization of Child Soldiers - Aspects of an Appropriate Education Program for Child Soldiers. Issue brief. March 2007. Accessed March 9, 2018. https://www.unicef.org/wcaro/Role_of_education_and_demobilised_children.pdf.

"Root Causes of Child Recruitment Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict." United Nations. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/effects-of-conflict/root-causes-of-child-soldiering/>

Saul, Heather. "The Most Dangerous ISIS Propaganda Yet?" The Independent, March 20, 2015. Accessed January 19, 2018. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/the-most-dangerous-isis-propaganda-yet-jihadi-brides-with-m5s-fighters-relaxing-and-children-playing-10121653.html>.

Sawyer, Kem Knapp, and Amanda Ottaway. "Kem Knapp Sawyer Keynotes Model UN Conference." Pulitzer Center. November 11, 2013. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://pulitzercenter.org/education/kem-knapp-sawyer-keynotes-model-un-conference>.

Schmitt, Eric. "Thousands of ISIS Fighters Flee in Syria, Many to Fight Another Day." The New York Times, February 4, 2018. Accessed February 7, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/04/world/middleeast/isis-syria-al-qaeda.html>.

Schmitt, Eric. "In Battle to Defang ISIS, U.S. Targets Its Psychology." The New York Times, December 28, 2014. Accessed February 5, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/29/us/politics/in-battle-to-defang-isis-us-targets-its-psychology-.html>.

Searcey, Dionne. "Boko Haram Strapped Suicide Bombs to Them. Somehow These Teenager Girls Survived." The New York Times, October 25, 2017. Accessed December 6, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/10/25/world/africa/nigeria-boko-haram-suicide-bomb.html?_r=0

Searcey, Dionne. "Years After Boko Haram Kidnapping, Dozens of Girls Are Freed, Nigeria Says." The New York Times, May 6, 2017. Accessed December 6, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/06/world/africa/nigeria-boko-haram-chibok-girls.html>

- Sesay, Mohamed Gibril, and Mohamed Suma. *Transitional Justice and DDR: The Case of Sierra Leone*. International Center for Transitional Justice. International Center for Transitional Justice. June 2009. Accessed March 9, 2018. <https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-DDR-Sierra-Leone-CaseStudy-2009-English.pdf>.
- Siegel, Harvey. *Educating Reason*. New York: Routledge Inc., 1988.
- Simkin, John. "Hitler Youth." Spartacus Educational. Accessed January 19, 2018. <http://spartacus-educational.com/GERyouth.htm>.
- Singer, P.W. *Children at War*. 1st ed. New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 2005.
- Singer, P.W. "Caution: Children At War." *Parameters*, December 1, 2001, 156-72. Accessed February 13, 2018. <http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/parameters/Articles/2010winter/Singer.pdf>.
- Singer, P.W. "Talk Is Cheap: Getting Serious About Preventing Child Soldiers." *Cornell International Law Journal* 37 (January 1, 2004): 561-86. Accessed February 5, 2018. <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/20041201.pdf>.
- Singer, P.W. "Facing Saddam's Child Soldiers." Brookings. January 14, 2003. Accessed February 07, 2018. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/facing-saddams-child-soldiers/>
- Snow, Shawn. "New in 2018: The fight against ISIS evolves." *Military Times*. January 04, 2018. Accessed March 10, 2018. <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2017/12/31/new-in-2018-the-fight-against-isis-evolves/>.
- Solomon, Christiana, and Jeremy Giniifer. *Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration in Sierra Leone*. Centre for International Security and Cooperation. Operations Paix. July 2008. Accessed March 9, 2018. http://www.operationspaix.net/DATA/DOCUMENT/4024~v~Disarmament_Demobilisation_and_Reintegration_in_Sierra_Leone.pdf.
- Speckhard, Anne, PhD., Ardian Shajkovci, PhD., & Ahmet S. Yayla, PhD. "Defected from ISIS or Simply Returned, and for How Long? – Challenges for the West in Dealing with Returning Foreign Fighters." *Homeland Security Affairs* 14, Article 1 (January 2018). <https://www.hsaj.org/articles/14263>
- Starr, Barbara, and Stephen Collinson. "Pentagon sends ISIS options to White House." *CNN*. February 27, 2017. Accessed January 28, 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2017/02/27/politics/the-pentagon-has-sent-isis-options-to-the-white-house/index.html>.

Stengel, Richard. "Why Saying 'Radical Islamic Terrorism' Isn't Enough." *The New York Times*, February 13, 2017. Accessed January 8, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/13/opinion/why-saying-radical-islamic-terrorism-isnt-enough.html?_r=1.

Stohl, Rachel, and Shannon Dick. "President Trump, you can stop the use of child soldiers." *CNN*. April 27, 2017(a). Accessed February 11, 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2017/04/26/opinions/trump-child-soldiers-opinion-stohl-dick/index.html>.

Stohl, Rachel, and Shannon Dick. "What America Can Do to Stop the Practice of Child Soldiers." *The National Interest*. November 6, 2017(b). Accessed February 11, 2018. <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/what-america-can-do-stop-the-practice-child-soldiers-23069>.

Stohl, Rachel, and Shannon Dick. "The Trump Administration Has Failed its First Test on Child Soldiers." *Foreign Policy*, June 30, 2017(c). Accessed February 11, 2018. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/30/the-trump-administration-has-failed-its-first-test-on-child-soldiers/>.

Syed, Nafeesa. "Airstrikes Kill 150 Islamic State Militants in Syria, U.S. Says." *Bloomberg Politics*, January 23, 2018. Accessed January 28, 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-01-23/airstrikes-kill-150-islamic-state-militants-in-syria-u-s-says>.

T. Webster, *Babes with Arms: International Law and Child Soldiers*, 39 *George Washington International Law Review* (2007).

"The Future of Our Fight Against Terrorism." Obama, Barack. From speech delivered at National Defense University, May 23, 2013.

The Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (Paris Principles), February 2007.

The White House, *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*, (2011): 1, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/empowering_local_partners.pdf

'They are the Enemy, So Beware of Them,' *Wilayat Raqqa Media Office*, 20 February 2016.

"This Indonesian school is deradicalizing the children of convicted terrorists." *VICE News*. January 23, 2018. Accessed March 10, 2018. https://news.vice.com/en_us/article/59w8kx/this-indonesian-school-is-deradicalizing-the-children-of-convicted-terrorists.

Tiefenbrun, Susan. "Child Soldiers, Slavery and the Trafficking of Children." *Fordham International Law Journal* 31, no. 2 (2007). Accessed February 20, 2018. <https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=2091&context=ilj>.

Today, NBC, Transcript May 10, 2002.

Townsend, Mark. "How Islamic State is training child killers in doctrine of hate." *The Guardian*, March 5, 2016. Accessed March 9, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/05/islamic-state-trains-purer-child-killers-in-doctrine-of-hate>.

Trafficking in Persons Report. Report. June 2017. Accessed February 11, 2018. <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/271339.pdf>.

"Trauma Healing and Reintegration Support." *Invisible Children*. Accessed February 17, 2018. <https://invisiblechildren.com/program/defection-fliers/>.

Trimel, Suzanne. "Countries Must Adopt Strong Arms Trade Treaty to Stop Contributing to the Use of Child Soldiers – Amnesty International USA." *Amnesty International USA*. February 11, 2013. Accessed February 17, 2018. <https://www.amnestyusa.org/press-releases/countries-must-adopt-strong-arms-trade-treaty-to-stop-contributing-to-the-use-of-child-soldiers/>.

Trump, Donald. "Remarks by President Trump at Listening Session on Domestic and International Human Trafficking." *Listening Session on Domestic and International Human Trafficking*, Roosevelt Room, Washington D.C., February 23, 2017. Accessed February 11, 2018. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-listening-session-domestic-international-human-trafficking/>.

Tynes, Robert and Early, Bryan R., "Governments, Rebels, and the Use of Child Soldiers in Internal Armed Conflicts: A Global Analysis, 1987-2007." *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy* 21, no. 1 (August 5, 2014): 79-110.

"UN: Strengthen Action to End Use of Child Soldiers." *Human Rights Watch*. February 12, 2009. Accessed February 05, 2018. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2009/02/12/un-strengthen-action-end-use-child-soldiers>.

UNICEF (2003). *Adult Wars, Child Soldiers*. Geneva. <https://www.unicef.org/eapro/AdultWarsChildSoldiers.pdf>

Warner, Jason, and Hilary Matfess. "Exploding Stereotypes." *Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point*, August 2017. Accessed December 6, 2017. <https://ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Exploding-Stereotypes-1.pdf>.

Webb, Sam. "Nazi-Obsessed ISIS Warlords Immerse Themselves in Adolf Hitler's Teachings." *The Sun*. November 04, 2016. Accessed January 16, 2018. <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2118499/nazi-obsessed-isis-warlords-immense-themselves-in-adolf-hitlers-teachings-as-arabic-version-of-mein-kampf-becomes-the-jihadis-must-read-book/>.

"What is DDR?" United Nations Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Resource Centre. May 2005. Accessed March 09, 2018. http://www.unddr.org/what-is-ddr/introduction_1.aspx. Secretary-General, note to the General Assembly, A/C.5/59/31

"What to do with Islamic State's child soldiers." *The Economist*. June 17, 2017. Accessed February 27, 2018. <https://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21723416-cubs-caliphate-are-growing-up-what-do-islamic-states-child>.

White, Jeffrey B. "Some Thoughts on Irregular Warfare." *American Intelligence Professional*, April 14, 2007. Accessed February 21, 2018. <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/96unclass/iregular.htm>.

"Who are the FARC?" *BBC News*. November 24, 2016. Accessed December 06, 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-36605769>.

Williams, Evan. *Children of ISIS*. Film. PBS. November 23, 2015. Accessed October 19, 2017.

Wood, Graeme. "What ISIS Really Wants." *The Atlantic*, March 2015, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/>

"Yemen: Huthi Forces Recruiting Child Soldiers for Front-line Combat." *Amnesty International*. February 28, 2017. Accessed December 06, 2017. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/02/yemen-huthi-forces-recruiting-child-soldiers-for-front-line-combat/>