

UC Berkeley

Charlene Conrad Liebau Library Prize for Undergraduate Research

Title

The Deterrable 'Undeterrables'

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8mj1d8mp>

Author

Boo, Carina

Publication Date

2010-12-01

Carina Boo

Prof. Michael Larkin

College Writing 4B

13 December 2010

Abstract

Before the Iraq War, Iraq only had two recorded instances of suicide bombings: one in March 1999 and the other in February 2003. However, after the war began on March 20, 2003, the number of suicide bombings in Iraq has continuously surged. At first, the rising suicide bombings could be linked to the flood of foreign bombers into Iraq. Yet, after 2005, we began to see more and more Iraqis participating in the suicide bombings. By the end of June 2010, Iraq held 1,344 incidents of suicide bombings—over half of the world’s 2,447 recorded suicide attacks since December 1981 (WITS). Why were so many Iraqis—people who never had a culture of suicide bombing—willing to take their own lives to kill others, including coalition forces, Iraqi police, and even regular Iraqi civilians attending mosque or shopping at marketplaces. People across the world tried to rationalize this phenomenon, coming up with theories that ranged from extreme hatred or religiosity to the ideologies of martyrdom and the gain of 72 virgins. As the suicide bombings raged in Iraq, most Americans held on to their old theories of hatred, religiosity, or martyrdom, even though many other motives had also evolved. Even worse, some people just disregarded the bombers' rationality completely, believing that they are “psychotics” or simply “stupid” (Rightsright and Kliffert). This report explores records of mainly Iraqi and a few Pakistani and Palestinian suicide bombers in the 2003 to 2010 time period, especially through primary source interviews with thwarted bombers or family members, in hopes of discovering the truth behind the suicide bombers’ psychology and also in hopes of educating Americans on this truth.

The Deterrable “Undeterrables”

Before the Iraq War began, there were only two recorded incidents of suicide bombings in Iraq, which were in 1999 and February 2003 (*RDWTI*). However, after the U.S. declared war on Iraq on March 20, 2003, suicide bombings incidents have consistently increased. At the dawn of war, the vast majority of the world’s suicide bombings were still occurring within the Palestine-Israel conflict. Now, Iraq has risen far past the Palestine-Israel record and currently holds 1,344 of the world’s 2,447 total recorded suicide attacks since December 1981—over half of all recorded attacks (*WITS* and *RDWTI*). Although the bombings have slowed since 2007, there are still no signs that they are about to stop. Just recently, on Sunday, October 31, 2010, at least 47 people were killed and 67 wounded when Islamic State of Iraq militants affiliated with al-Qaeda stormed a Baghdad Christian church and held over 100 Mass attendees hostage for hours, only to end in a bloodbath when one of the militants detonated his suicide vest as Iraqi security forces tried to free the hostages (McEvers and Abdul-Razaq).

With so many suicide bombings occurring in Iraq and throughout the Middle East today, we, with our natural tendencies to want to know why, will eventually question the reasoning behind these attacks. Especially because this is such an unordinary and puzzling phenomenon, where human beings are willing to end their own lives and turn themselves into murderous bombs, people across the world frequently will wonder, and do wonder, who are these people and why are they doing this? One of the most widely believed reasons is that they are doing it out of hatred. This would seem most logical since after all, in the America’s first and most well known experience with terrorism—the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center—hatred and anger was indeed the case. The perpetrators saw the U.S. as enemies in their eyes—enemies who had

gravely wronged the Muslim people and deserved revenge. Because of this incident, many Americans held the view that terrorists are Muslim extremists driven by a dangerous hatred.

Even Thomas Friedman, a well-known foreign-affairs columnist of *The New York Times* since 1995 and previous chief economic correspondent in the Washington bureau, strongly believed that terrorists were driven by hatred, so driven, in fact, that he terms these terrorists the “undeterrables” (Friedman). He believes that it is these people—people like the “boys who did 9/11, who hate us more than they love life,...these human missiles of mass destruction”—who will “destroy our open society.” Because of these beliefs, he eagerly supported the invasion of Iraq when people were still debating the issue back in 2003. Friedman saw terrorism as an inevitable threat, linked the cause to the “collection of faltering Arab states” with their GDP and economy falling tremendously behind the rest of the world’s economies, and believed that by invading Iraq, the U.S. could provide a much needed “regime transformation in Iraq [that] could make a valuable contribution to the war on terrorism” (Friedman).

Friedman is right in many aspects of his argument. He is correct to have believed that these terrorists were from Arab states. As the U.S. government database reveals, about 63% of the world’s recorded suicide attacks since January 2004 occurred within the Arab states, mainly Iraq (*WITS*). Another 33% occurred in Pakistan and Afghanistan, though technically not considered Arab states, still have a large population of people with Arab culture and Muslim religion (*WITS*). He is also correct that the Arab countries’ GDP have fallen far behind. As Friedman uses to support his claim, the United Nation's Arab Human Development Report informs that the Arab states’ economies have “fallen so far behind the world their combined GDP does not equal that of Spain.” CIA’s records show that indeed the major countries where suicide terrorism is happening holds very low GDPs. In U.S. dollars, Pakistan’s nominal GDP is

about \$167 billion, Iraq's is \$66 billion, and Afghanistan's is a mere \$14 billion while Spain, with a GDP that is only 10.4% of the United States, already holds a GDP of \$1.5 trillion (*The World Factbook*). Even with the numbers giving evidence, by assuming that terrorism is linked to a falling economy, Friedman's argument is flawed. As low as Afghanistan's GDP is, over 50% of the world's non-Arab countries actually hold a GDP lower than that of Afghanistan (*The World Factbook*). Yet they are not "churning out these undeterrables – these angry, humiliated and often unemployed Muslim youth" (Friedman), so we cannot simply conclude that unemployment and low GDP is the cause, making the needed solution to be improving their economies. Mohammed Hafez, a distinguished American researcher on Iraqi suicide terrorism and who has given guidance to the World Affairs Council on such issues, remarks that these suicide bombers actually do not come from a specific socio-economic background (Hafez). He notes that they range from poor to affluent, well-off individuals.

Another point Friedman made clear was that he believed these terrorists are driven by hatred of their victims, and not just any kind of regular anger, but a hatred stronger than their love for their own lives (Friedman). This in fact seems logical, as no human being wishes to die and our natural instincts—whether it be our instincts to flee from danger or simply our growling stomachs telling us to eat—is done to survive. There must be some explanation for their willingness to sacrifice their own lives. The only logical explanation leads to something stronger than will to live. Where Friedman stands corrected is in his leap to conclude that this motivating factor is the overwhelming emotion of hatred. If it truly was just anger and hatred towards the U.S, then there are so many other paths they can choose to retaliate against us without having to take their *own* lives. These options could range from the commonly used roadside bombs known as IEDs, vehicle-borne IEDs, mortars, or just the old-fashioned guns to fire on the troops. So

there must be other driving factors, besides just hatred, behind their decisions to become suicide bombers.

Nevertheless, even some of the flaws in Friedman's argument, he cannot quite be fully blamed. He did write these opinions back in January 2003 before the Iraq War began, when we had only seen mainly the 9/11-suicide attack and some in the Palestine-Israeli conflict. This was before Iraqi suicide bombings were prevalent and before investigators, journalists, and news reporters began to do serious research and interviews with suicide bombers and their family members to try to find out their backgrounds and motives. However, what *is* the concern, besides the overwhelming problem of suicide terrorism, are Americans' current assumptions about who these Iraqi terrorists are. Many Americans, like Friedman had thought, still think that these suicide bombers mainly result from poor economies and that they are Muslim youth driven by extreme hatred.

By reading through and examining a wide range of comments made by Americans in response to news reports on suicide bombings, a general sense of the beliefs about the motives of suicide bombers can be obtained. Responding to an USA Today news article about a suicide attack in 2009, where a female bomber "struck a tent filled with women and children resting during a Shiite pilgrimage south of Baghdad, killing 40 people and wounding about 80," a mother in Ohio comments that "these [M]uslims will never change. They...need to be watched carefully....Their hate is far reaching and dangerous" ("Momnohio"). She shows similar assumptions to Friedman—both in her belief that these suicide bombers are driven by hatred and in her attitude towards the bombers, viewing them as undeterrable bombers who "will never change." Though the targeted victims were clearly stated, the article does not reveal the actual motives or identification of the female bomber. It even explicitly states that "no group claimed

responsibility for Friday's blast.” Therefore, we can infer that this commenter most likely held this view that suicide bombers were driven by hatred even before she read this article.

In another article—a 2008 TIME magazine piece on the inside story of female suicide bomber Hasna Maryi—readers showed a wide, varied levels of responses towards these suicide bombers. The article tells of how after Hasna Maryi’s brother died failing his mission to suicide bomb Iraq’s Kilometer 5 security checkpoint, Maryi, who was left in devastation, bombed the security checkpoint herself to complete his mission in achieving martyrdom (Ghosh “Female...”). Many remarks were statements such as “psychotics” (“Rightsright”), which shows both the commenter’s apathy and disregard of these bombers, as he has probably heard of similar bombing incidents repeatedly by now and simply ignores them as crazy, unreasonable people. Others also show a similar attitude, but with slightly more knowledge of the bombers’ culture of martyrdom. One reader says “very stupid...is not martyrdom its suicide mixed in with murder...Islam [forbids] it...[Hasna] should have read the Koran” (“Klifferd”). Another comments “wonder where the 72 virgin[s] figures into this story...” (“Nanc”). These latter two comments not only reveal their beliefs that Iraqis who became bombers did it for the ideologies of martyrdom—that Allah wants them to kill the enemies who terrorize the Muslim people and that Allah promises these martyrs an afterlife in paradise with 72 virgins—but their comments also reveal a large portion of Americans’ views.

Even Iraqis themselves have become extremely frustrated, believing that the suicide bombers are insane, irrational extremists. After the suicide attack on the UN building in August 2003, Salam Pax, a proven-to-be real Iraqi blogger who actually witnessed the aftermath of the suicide bombing of the UN building, stated in frustration, “do we have a future? [Is] this country going to be hijacked by shit extremists who want to prove a point?” (Pax). Many people, whether

Iraqis who actually experienced the bombing or people across the world looking at television footage after the bombing of the UN building, can be imagined to have similar feelings towards these suicide bombers—that they are psychotic extremists who are never going to stop. Of course these five comments are not perfectly representative of the views of the entire U.S. or Iraqi population. Nonetheless, they still serve to give a general idea of people’s common attitude towards Iraqi suicide bombers and people’s beliefs about the motivational factors that drive them to become suicide terrorists.

Of course these people certainly have the right to be concerned, frustrated, and even sometimes apathetic over these suicide-bombing incidents, as suicide attacks, both globally and especially in Iraq, have become extremely common. Whether using hijacked planes like in the case of 9/11, car bombs, or just explosives packed into vests and belts, these terrorists have killed thousands of human lives, ranging from U.S. troops, Iraqi police, to innocent crowds of civilians. Just within the last six years (Jan 2004 - June 2010), a recorded 1,320 suicide attacks in Iraq killed a total of 13,249 people and injured another 33,793 more (*WITS*), and still, this number makes up only a portion of the actual total suicide bombings as not all incidents are always reported. These suicide attacks and “human missiles” (Friedman) are certainly of great concern, and as both Friedman and the mother in Ohio expressed, a great threat to society that “need[s] to be watched carefully” and stopped.

However, the first step to stopping this seemingly endless suicide attacks that are plaguing Iraq and Afghanistan lies in clearly understanding the cause. This is what many investigators, journalists, and news reporters have tried to uncover through collecting inside intelligence, through interviews with captured or to-be suicide bombers such as ones from the insurgent groups al-Qaeda in Iraq and Ansar al-Sunna, and through interviews with already-dead

suicide bombers' family members and neighbors. Even with increasing efforts, such findings are scarce, since as quite simply stated by a U.S. military official serving in Iraq, "often with suicide bombers, there's not enough left of them to be identified" (Williams). Sometimes their names are found posted on jihadist websites, or videos of them reading their will—also known as a wasiyeh—are discovered, giving clues to their identities and background. Yet, we are still left quite clueless to what goes on inside their minds that drives them to become suicide bombers. Nonetheless, researchers' and journalists' efforts to uncover the truth behind the minds of these Iraqi and Arab bombers through personal interviews and remaining videos have given way to some important and surprising discoveries, along with some remarkable insight in their psychology.

What their discoveries reveal is that even though people's beliefs that Arab suicide bombers are driven by hatred and religion are true, and that their motives do indeed include the social gains of honor as a martyr, the physical gain of 72 virgins, and the spiritual gain of paradise in their afterlife; these interviews and research also revealed something more—that these motives were not as simple as we thought them to be. They showed that there were many other explanations besides the common hatred and religion explanations, and that more often than not, what drives these suicide bombers are a largely complex mix of factors, including strong brotherhood within the Muslim community and personal grievances, added to the factor of the widely accepted ideology of martyrdom within the Muslim population.

One of the most surprising discoveries may be that these suicide bombers, though in the past were always viewed as self-driven to kill and die, may actually not all be self-driven. In fact, a good portion of them are increasingly manipulated into becoming bombers, whether it is because of their vulnerable childhood innocence, mental illnesses, or poor mental health

conditions. For example, in 2008, interviews reveal that a 14-year-old Afghan suicide bomber, Shakirullah, was actually manipulated by his two religious teachers. At first, when Scott Taylor, who has done years of reporting on the Iraq and Afghan Wars, was offered to interview a thwarted suicide bomber by Afghan intelligence in May 2008, he—just like many other Americans—thought that the perpetrator would be a religious extremist or some evil-minded man. He says, "we were anticipating seeing a bearded, full on, fanatical Taliban jihadist...chained up" (Shakirullah), but what he found instead was an innocent-looking regular 14-year-old boy . Shakirullah's story of how he became a suicide bomber is one of manipulation of innocent and the religious. After he finished his first Qur'an studies, his two Muslim teachers, called mullahs, told him that "time had come for him to serve God in Afghanistan" and that if he truly "believed in serving God, [then] it was [his] duty to fight against the foreigners" (Sengupta)—again, using Shakirullah's religious beliefs and innocence to take advantage of him. In the interview, Shakirullah tells Taylor that he "didn't know what he was doing" (Shakirullah). The mullahs just told him that he "must leave at once." It was only on the drive down to Afghanistan that they revealed him to his mission—driving a car bomb. He desperately wanted to return to his family, but he "did not know anyone in the area [he] could run to" and his mullahs kept assuring him "that to be a good Muslim [he] must fulfill [his] duty." He remembers that all he could do was "pray [he] would be all right." After training him how to drive, his mullahs took him to a man known as Doctor, who loaded the car with two bags of bombs. In another interview with *The Independent* newspaper journalist Kim Sengupta, Sengupta notes that Shakirullah stated in a "soft, nervous voice," "If I had succeeded, I would be dead now, I realize that" (Sengupta).

Watching Shakirullah's filmed interview with Taylor and reading his account in print written by Sengupta, Shakirullah does not seem to be a boy just making this story up, but rather

truly seems more innocent and helpless than evil—the type of innocent young boy who would be prone to obediently follow his elders’ instruction, allowing him to be taken advantaged of and almost wasted as human bomb. Fortunately for him and the many others who would have died that day, Afghan police caught him as he was driving the car full of explosives, but not all suicide bombing stories end this way.

In another case, Iraqi Samira Jassim, now detained for recruiting over 80 Iraqi female suicide bombers and successfully carrying out 28 attacks, also reveal some of the manipulation that has been occurring in Iraq. However, instead of manipulating the innocent religious youth, Jassim targeted mentally ill and distressed women. In a February 2009 CNN report, Jomana Karadsheh reveals that 51-year-old Jassim had been working for the Ansar al-Sunna militant group, recruiting females bombers, since women could often transport bombs easier since they were not supposed to be “searched by men for cultural and religious reasons” (Karadsheh). In Jassim’s confession, recorded by *The New York Times* journalist Steven Myers, Jassim reveals that she targeted women struggling through mental stress and other personal problems. One woman, Amal, was a teacher “living in difficult conditions. Her husband and his family were having problems with her brothers. She was in bad psychological shape” (Myers). This woman, finally convinced by Jassim, died in December of 2007, taking 15 lives with her as she exploded at a meeting of the Sunni Awakening movement in Diyala. In a *SkyNews* report, she also is stated to have convinced “two women who were said at the time to have Down syndrome” to blow themselves up in front of a Baghdad building, also killing many—mostly ending up being civilians (“The Face...”). These inside stories have helped reveal some of the types of people who are prone to becoming suicide bombers, and also prone to be targeted for recruitment. As Steven Myers concludes, insurgents “prey on women in dire social and economic situations who are

often suffering from emotional or psychological problems, or abuse,” which is supported by several news reports.

Yet, what may be even worse than psychologically manipulating humans to their deaths where the bombers at least die believing that they are doing the right thing, are the unpredictable physical manipulations that are also increasing. In a 2007 CNN report, one 42-year-old suicide bomber Kamal Al Hakani was actually an unwilling, kidnapped civilian bomber. In the interview with CNN’s reputable reporter Arwa Damon, Kamal’s mother reveals that the Al Hakani family “never had anything to do with politics or the war” and that Kamal was only driving out to get breakfast for the family that morning when he must have been forced to drive towards the security checkpoint, but “realized that his vehicle was raged with explosives” (“Unwilling...”). Police witnesses at the checkpoint recall Al Hakani screaming in desperation as he drove towards them, “I am booby-trapped. I am booby trapped,” (“Unwilling...”) but his car blew up before he could finish his words. Most likely, as police concluded, his car was detonated by remote control. Such incidents of kidnappings have also been observed even starting back in 2005. A *Los Angeles Times* article—written by Carol Williams, who has done reporting on Iraqi and other foreign affairs for the past 30 years—confirms these cases where the bombers are actually unwillingly forced to become drivers of car bombs that are then detonated by remote control. Evidence for this has included feet “duct-taped to the car’s accelerator and hands fastened to the steering wheel” (Williams).

These reports reveal that many of these suicide terrorists are not the “angry, humiliated...unemployed Muslim youth,” the “psychotics,” and the “extremists” (Friedman, “Rightsright,” and Pax) many of us might have thought they were. The overall motives for suicide bombings are far more complex and twisted than any of us had imagined. Almost

ironically, these reports also reveal that in some cases, the motives we strive so hard to seek may possibly never be found because they do not actually exist, such as in Al Hakani's case or other incidents where the bombers have become victims themselves.

Nevertheless, this is not to say that all suicide bombers are innocent victims who have been manipulated. Such a conclusion would certainly be misleading for there are also interviews that have revealed suicide bombers to also be largely influenced by their ideologies of jihad and martyrdom, such as in the case of a Palestinian bomber who states in an interview with documentary-director Pierre Rehov that he "wanted to be a martyr for God" and that God would have "given him 72 virgins" in his afterlife. Another similar case is seen through an al-Qaeda in Iraq suicide bomber, Marwan, who is known for his "ferociousness in battle and deep religiosity" back in his hometown, Falloojeh. In a 2005 interview with TIME magazine journalist Bobby Ghosh, Marwan states that the final straw that convinced him to join the insurgency was when "U.S. soldiers fired on a crowd of protestors at a school, killing 12 people and wounding many more" back in April 2003. As Marwan awaits his mission, he states, "The most important thing is that [Allah] should let me kill many Americans....I am ready to die now" (Ghosh "Inside..."). These statements may certainly seem to confirm our beliefs that most terrorists are battle-hard jihadists and religious extremists dying to kill the American "enemies" and ready to become martyrs. And it is true—in some instances there may actually be strongly religious suicide bombers like Marwan and the Palestinian bomber who "fight...for Islam," to "become martyr[s]," and also to "remove Americans from Iraq" (Ghosh "Inside...").

However, to fully comprehend their motives and not just disregard incidents like Marwan's as religious extremists or psychotics, we must also see past his words, and take note that Marwan joined the insurgents in the first place because of the crime he remembers the U.S.

have done. Though it is wrong for Marwan to take a few selective mistakes that certain U.S. troops might have made and ignorantly conclude that *all* U.S. troops are the same and deserve to die, his behavior is not entirely incomprehensible, since it is human tendency to jump to conclusions in anger and frustration. This human behavior can be seen, again, even in reputable people like Thomas Friedman. He, along with a nation in anger over the terrorist attack of 9/11, mistakenly groups all Arab terrorists together and assumes that they are a collective force of “undeterrables,” with a common motivational force of hatred stronger than they love life. Yet, we can now see that this is certainly not the case, as these individuals’ motivations and stories vary widely, ranging from being manipulated, desires to become martyrs, all the way to desires for revenge.

As Marwan’s interview reveals, because the natural human tendency to jump to conclusions amidst our anger will exist no matter how immoral we may argue it to be, we may have to try even harder to fade out the negative view of the U.S. as invaders and return them to view us with our original good intentions of liberating them and providing them with a better government. In order to reduce these suicide bombings and bring peace back in Iraq, not only should we strive to prevent manipulations like those seen in the cases of Shakirullah, Jassim’s recruits, and Al Hakani, we may also have to take extra precaution to prevent incidents like the school shootings that Marwan saw, and especially incidents like Abu Ghraib or Falloojeh, which Mohammed Hafez reports to have angered and driven many Iraqis to become bombers. By preventing such incidents, we will not only eliminate the basis which many jihadist suicide bombers use to justify their attacks, but we will also help gain a much more positive attitude overall towards U.S. in Iraq, which in turn will reduce the number of civilians supporting insurgent groups.

What complicate things even further though, is that other interviews have revealed that sometimes even those who explicitly say they want to become martyr, are not actually driven by the ideologies of martyrdom. In the case of Palestinian Wafa Al' Biss, what actually drove her to carry 20 pounds of explosives in her pants and try to bomb an Israeli hospital in June 2005, was actually personal grievances. In her interview, she says, "I wanted to be a martyr" ("Female..."). Yet this simple statement was not as simple as the situation actually was. Wafa had been staying at the Israeli hospital for several months, getting treatment for her severe burns. As revealed in her interview, Wafa liked the doctors there and the doctors enjoyed her company, too. Yet, a female hospital worker, who talked with Wafa daily for months, later reveals that "Wafa's fiancé [had] left her. [Wafa] felt abandoned and ugly. She cried and said, 'I want to die.'" ("Female..."). Although Wafa was able obtain explosives from militants in the al-Aqsa brigades, when she pulled the detonator, expecting to die, her bomb did not go off, and she was left "scream[ing] in frustration" ("Female..."). Later, she was taken by police, and in the news report, her mother is seen in tears, as she obviously cares about her daughter, and Wafa is seen moved to tears herself begging for forgiveness, saying "I wanted to be a martyr, but now I want to live" ("Female...").

Had we not known her whole story, she may have seemed just like Marwan or any other regular person suicide bombing for martyrdom. However because, she like Shakirullah, was lucky enough to survive, we discover that not all of these people seemingly dying for martyrdom, are actually purely motivated by martyrdom—that what might actually be the main problem could just be devastation from personal grievances. However, this complication might actually prove to be an advantage as we try to stop suicide terrorism. As seen in Wafa when she cries and states, "now I want to live" and also seen in Shakirullah who timidly says "If I had succeeded, I would be dead now, I realize that," not all of these so-called terrorists are the

relentless, headstrong bombers who many of us viewed them as. Not only are they not all evil-minded and driven by hatred, but some, especially those who were driven by personal grievances, if given the chance to realize that there is so much more worth living for, may actually realize that they do not actually want to end up wasted as human bombs. Even Hasna Maryi—the Iraqi bomber mentioned earlier, who decided to be a bomber in order to redeem her beloved little brother as a martyr by completing his uncompleted mission—if she had not succeeded in her suicide bombing at Kilometer 5 that day, may have very well realized that she had a sister and mother who cares about her, and that though she loves her brother very much, he is not the only part of her life worth living for.

Even with an increasing number of interviews, readers should note that there still exists a large factor of uncertainty. It remains difficult to determine how much each of the motives uncovered weighs in the overall percentage of suicide bombers. In this report, the motivations and factors discussed are the manipulation of innocent and mentally troubled victims, kidnappings of unwilling civilians, gains of honor and paradise that comes with martyrdom, anger towards the U.S. who they feel have wronged the Muslim people, and lastly personal grievances mixed in with ideologies of martyrdom. Yet, as widely and accurately representative as this report strives to be, we still cannot be sure that the motives revealed in these interviews can fully represent all the different possible motives of Pakistani, Palestinian, and Iraqi suicide bombers, since not all bombers or their family members had the chance to be interviewed. Even when they were interviewed, though they sometimes have a few common motives or similar aspects, each individual holds a very unique mix of motives when their life stories are looked into more closely. These factors of uncertainty complicate how much the discoveries from these

interviews weigh in the bigger picture of the motives of suicide terrorism, especially when trying to find policies to deal with this increasing problem.

Even so, these discoveries—as complex as they are—may not be as disappointing as it might first seem. Overall, even with so many differing motives, these interviews actually will still prove useful for finding various paths that we might try to end these bombings that largely plague Iraq. These policies might include preventing the mentally ill and distressed from being targeted by militant groups, turning the view towards Americans from invaders back to the original liberators that we intended to be, preventing those who struggle from poor mental health conditions from wanting to suicide, and probably most importantly, fading out the now widely-accepted, yet tragically twisted culture of martyrdom, which gives them justification for suicide in the first place. But possibly most significant of all, these interviews have revealed that, although it will most likely be a long and difficult task, there *are* ways to fix this rising problem. If we are willing to break past our misunderstandings and stereotypes, carefully distinguish the truth behind these suicide bombers, and make prudent decisions based on our findings, many of these Friedman-termed “undeterrables” may in fact turn out to be “deterrables.”

Works Cited

- Abdul-Razaq, Salah. "Iraq TV station taken off air after deadly church raid." BBC News 1 Nov. 2010. Web. 20 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/>>.
- "Female Homicide Bomber." NBC. Beer Sheva, Israel. 20 Jun. 2005. Television.
- Friedman, Thomas. "Thinking About Iraq (I)." *The New York Times*. 22 Jan. 2003. Web. 19 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.nytimes.com/>>.
- Ghosh, Bobby. "Inside the Mind of an Iraqi Suicide Bomber." *TIME*. TIME, 26 Jun. 2005. Web. 3 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.time.com/>>.
- Ghosh, Bobby. "Female Suicide Bombers: The Latest Weapon." *TIME*. TIME, 22 Jun. 2008. Web. 20 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.time.com/>>.
- Hafez, Mohammed. *Suicide Bombings in Iraq: Understanding the Strategy and Ideology*. World Affairs Council of Northern California. World Affairs Council of Northern California, San Francisco, CA. 35 March 2008. Keynote Speech. Web. 5 Nov 2010. <http://fora.tv/2008/03/25/Mohammed_Hafez_on_Suicide_Bombings_in_Iraq>.
- Karadsheh, Jomana. "Iraq: Suspected female militant 'recruiter' held." *CNN*. 3 Feb. 2009. Web. 21 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.cnn.com>>.
- "Klifferd." "Yea very stupid..." [Weblog comment.] 23 Jun. 2008. "One Female Suicide Bomber's Story." "Rcade." Drudge Retort. 23 Jun. 2008. Web. 6 Dec. 2010. <<http://www.drudge.com/archive/109232/one-female-suicide-bombers-story>>.
- McEvers, Kelly. "Dozens Killed in Iraq Church Siege." NPR 1 Nov. 2010. Web. 20 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.npr.org>>.
- "Momnohio." "These muslims will never change..." [Article comment.] 14 Feb. 2009. "Female Suicide Bomber Kills 40 in Iraq." *USA TODAY*. 13 Feb. 2009. Web. 7 Dec. 2010.

<<http://www.usatoday.com/news/>>.

Myers, Steven Lee. "Iraq Arrests Woman Tied to Bombings." *The New York Times* 3 Feb. 2009.

Web. 21 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.nytimes.com/>>.

"Nanc." "Wonder where the 72...virgin[s]..." [Weblog comment.] 23 Jun. 2008. "One Female Suicide Bomber's Story." "Rcade." Drudge Retort. 23 Jun. 2008. Web. 6 Dec. 2010.

<<http://www.drudge.com/archive/109232/one-female-suicide-bombers-story>>.

Pax, Salam. *Where is Raed?* 20 Aug. 2003. <http://dear_raed.blogspot.com/2003_08_01_archive.html>.

RAND Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents. RAND National Defense Research

Institute Project, 9 Jun. 2010. Web. 14 Nov. 2010. <http://smapp.rand.org/rwtid/search_form.php>.

"Rightsright." "Psychotics." [Weblog comment.] 23 Jun. 2008. "One Female Suicide Bomber's Story." "Rcade." Drudge Retort. 23 Jun. 2008. Web. 6 Dec. 2010. <<http://www.drudge.com/archive/109232/one-female-suicide-bombers-story>>.

Sengupta, Kim. "The 14-year-old Afghan suicide bomber." *The Independent*. 10 Jun. 2008. Web. 21 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.independent.co.uk/>>.

Shakirullah. *Interview With a Suicide Bomber*. Interview with Scott Taylor. Global News, May 2008. Web. 13 Nov. 2010.

Suicide Killers. Dir. Pierre Rehov. City Lights Pictures, 2006. Documentary.

"The Face of a Woman." SkyNews. Baghdad. 26 Nov. 2008. Television.

The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency, 1943. Web. 12 Dec. 2010.

"Unwilling Iraqi 'Suicide' Bombers." CNN. Baghdad. 4 Jul. 2007. Television.

Williams, Carol J.. "Suicide Attacks Rising Rapidly: Increasingly, the bombers are Iraqis instead

of foreign infiltrators. Civilians and police, not GIs, are the prime targets.” *Los Angeles Times*. 2 Jun. 2005. Web. 7 Dec. 2010. <<http://articles.latimes.com/>>.

Worldwide Incidents Tracking System. National Counterterrorism Center, Jun. 2010. Web. 13 Nov. 2010. <<https://wits.nctc.gov/>>.