

ISIS is America's New Terror Brand: Endless Propaganda Fuels "War on Terror"

By [James F. Tracy](#)

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In the wake of World War I, erstwhile propagandist and political scientist Harold Lasswell famously defined propaganda as "the management of collective attitudes" and the "control over opinion" through "the manipulation of significant symbols." [1] The extent to which this tradition is enthusiastically upheld in the West and the United States in particular is remarkable.

The American public is consistently propagandized by its government and corporate news media on the most vital of contemporary issues and events.

Deception on such a scale would be of little consequence if the US were not the most powerful economic and military force on earth. 

[Image Credit: Vice News]

A case in point is the hysteria Western news media are attempting to create concerning the threat posed by the mercenary-terrorist army now being promoted as the Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria, or "ISIS."

As was the case with the US intelligence asset and bogey publicized as "Al Qaeda," and Al Qaeda's Syrian adjunct, "Al Nusra," such entities are—apparently by design—inadequately investigated and defined by major news media. Absent meaningful historical context they usefully serve as another *raison d'être* for America's terminal "War on Terror."

A seemingly obvious feature of such terrorist forces left unexamined by corporate media is that they are observably comprised of the same or comparable personnel unleashed elsewhere throughout the Middle East as part of a strategy proposed during the George W. Bush administration in 2007.[2]

With the above observations in mind, ISIS is well-financed, militarily proficient, and equipped with modern vehicles and weaponry. It also exhibits an uncanny degree of media savvy in terms of propagating its message in professional-looking videos and on platforms such as YouTube and Twitter. "Western intelligence services," the New York Times reports, claim to be "worried about their extraordinary command of seemingly less lethal weapons: state-of-the-art videos, ground images shot from drones, and multilingual Twitter messages." [3]

Along these lines, ISIS even received a largely sympathetic portrayal in a five-part series produced and aired by the Rupert Murdoch-backed Vice News.[4] Indeed, Vice News' "The Spread of the Caliphate" is reminiscent of the public relations-style reportage produced via

the “embedding” of corporate news media personnel with US and allied forces during the 2003 conquest of Iraq.

The overt support of ISIS, combined with the fact that it is battling the same Syrian government the Obama administration overtly sought to wage war against just one year ago, strongly suggest the organization’s sponsorship by Western intelligence and military interests.

ISIS’s curious features are readily apparent to non-Western news outlets and citizenries. For example, Iran’s PressTV recently asked its readership, “Why does the ISIL have such easy access to Twitter, Youtube and other social media to propagate its ideologies?” The answer choices are, “1) Because the ISIL has very capable technicians who can best use social media, or 2) Because the US and Britain have provided the ISIL with unrestricted social media platform[s].” Note that the first choice is the overarching assumption of Western media outlets. Yet perhaps unsurprisingly, 90 percent of PressTV readers selected choice two.[5]

No such queries are so much as alluded to by major corporate media, all of which are united in the notion that ISIS is an essentially indigenous phenomenon. Yet as coverage of the events of September 11, 2001 and subsequent state-sponsored terrorism indicates, such media are essentially a component of the national security state, their reports and broadcast scripts all but overtly written by intelligence and military organizations.

In the wake of 9/11 US news media seldom asked about the origins of Al Qaeda—particularly how it was a product of US intelligence agencies. With the history of Al Qaeda omitted, the Bush administration was permitted to wage war on Afghanistan almost immediately following those staged attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

Yet as is much the case with today’s manufactured ISIS phenomenon, that history was readily available, and its careful public examination might have implicated the United States intelligence community in the 9/11 attacks. “During the Cold War, but also in its aftermath,” Michel Chossudovsky observes,

the CIA—using Pakistan’s military intelligence apparatus as a “go between”—played a key role in training the Mujhadeen. In turn, the CIA-sponsored guerrilla training was integrated with the teachings of Islam. Both the Clinton and Bush administrations have consistently supported the “Militant Islamic Base”, including Osama bin Laden’s Al Qaeda, as part of their foreign policy agenda. The links between Osama bin Laden and the Clinton administration in Bosnia and Kosovo are well documented by congressional records.[6]

As the United States and world approach the thirteenth anniversary of the most momentous false flag in modern history, the American public would be well-served to remind itself that ISIS is the new Al Qaeda—in other words, the new pretext that will in all likelihood be used by to take police state measures at home and military aggression abroad to new, perhaps unprecedented, levels.

With the above in mind, it is telling that one of the US government’s greatest fears isn’t ISIS at all. “The FBI’s most recent threat assessment for domestic terrorism makes no reference

to Islamist terror threats,” the Washington Free Beacon reports, “despite last year’s Boston Marathon bombing and the 2009 Fort Hood shooting—both carried out by radical Muslim Americans.”

Instead, the nation’s foremost law enforcement agency is preoccupied with what it deems “domestic extremism” exhibited by its own subjects.[7] A primary manifestation of such “extremism” is possessing the curiosity to discern and seek out truths and information amidst the barrage of manipulated symbols the government and corporate-controlled media use to undermine a potentially informed public.

Notes

[1] Harold Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1927/1971.

[2] Seymour Hersh, “[The Redirection: Is the Administration’s New Policy Benefitting Our Enemies in the War on Terrorism?](#)” *New Yorker*, March 5, 2007; Tony Cartalucci, “[Extremists Ravaging Syria Created by US in 2007](#),” *Land Destroyer Report*, May 11, 2012.

[3] Scott Shane and Ben Hubbard, “[ISIS Displaying a Deft Command of Varied Media](#),” *New York Times*, August 30, 2014.

[4] Joe Bercofici, “[Thanks to Rupert Murdoch, Vice is Worth \\$1.4 Billion. Could it be in Play Soon?](#)” *Forbes*, August 19, 2014; Medyan Dairieh, “[The Spread of the Caliphate: The Islamic State](#),” *Vice News*, August 13, 2014.

[5] PressTV Poll, <http://presstv.ir>, retrieved on August 30, 2014.

[6] Michel Chossudovsky, *America’s “War on Terrorism”* Second Edition, Montreal CA: Global Research, 2005, 4.

[7] Bill Gertz, “[FBI National Domestic Threat Assessment Omits Islamist Terrorism](#),” *Washington Free Beacon*, August 29, 2014.

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About the author:

James F. Tracy was a tenured Associate Professor of Journalism and Media Studies at Florida Atlantic University from 2002 to 2016. He was fired by FAU ostensibly for violating the university's policies imposed on the free speech rights of faculty. Tracy has

filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against the university, with trial set to begin November 27, 2017. Tracy received his PhD from University of Iowa. His work on media history, politics and culture has appeared in a wide variety of academic journals, edited volumes, and alternative news and opinion outlets. Additional information is available at MemoryHoleBlog.com, TracyLegalDefense.org, and jamesftracy.wordpress.com.

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