



ISIS: The State of Terror

By Jessica Stern, J. M. Berger

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ISIS: The State of Terror By Jessica Stern, J. M. Berger

The Islamic State, known as ISIS, exploded into the public eye in 2014 with startling speed and shocking brutality. It has captured the imagination of the global jihadist movement, attracting recruits in unprecedented numbers and wreaking bloody destruction with a sadistic glee that has alienated even the hardcore terrorists of its parent organization, al Qaeda.

Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger, two of America's leading experts on terrorism, dissect the new model for violent extremism that ISIS has leveraged into an empire of death in Iraq and Syria, and an international network that is rapidly expanding in the Middle East, North Africa and around the world.

ISIS: The State of Terror traces the ideological innovations that the group deploys to recruit unprecedented numbers of Westerners, the composition of its infamous snuff videos, and the technological tools it exploits on social media to broadcast its atrocities, and its recruiting pitch to the world, including its success at attracting thousands of Western adherents. The authors examine ISIS's predatory abuse of women and children and its use of horror to manipulate world leaders and its own adherents as it builds its twisted society. The authors offer a much-needed perspective on how world leaders should prioritize and respond to ISIS's deliberate and insidious provocations.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger’s new book, “ISIS,” should be required reading for every politician and policymaker... Their smart, granular analysis is a bracing antidote to both facile dismissals and wild exaggerations.... Stern and Berger offer a nuanced and readable account of the ideological and organizational origins of the group.” (Washington Post)

“By far the most important contribution yet to our understanding of an organization that remains cloaked in mystery and misunderstanding . . . A brisk, readable, and eye-opening account of ISIS’s past, present, and future. This is a book every American should read.” (Reza Aslan, author of *No God but god* and *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth*)

“A timely and urgent book that is essential reading for analysts and policy makers alike. In what is already a cornerstone contribution, Stern and Berger offer the kind of cold-blood analysis so desperately needed on the poorly understood phenomenon that is the so-called Islamic state.” (John Horgan, author of *The Psychology of Terrorism*)

“The first serious book to analyze the rise of ISIS . . . Stern and Berger write clearly and persuasively and marshal impressive primary research from ISIS’s prodigious propaganda to help explain how ISIS became the dominant jihadi group today. It’s a terrific and important read.” (Peter Bergen, author of *Manhunt: The Ten-Year Search for Bin Laden from 9/11 to Abbottabad*)

“Stern and Berger pull back the curtain to expose facts and myths about the violent Salafi apocalyptic cult calling itself the Islamic State. A must-read.” (Mike Walker, former undersecretary and acting secretary of the United States Army)

“ISIS emerged in territory occupied by American soldiers, governed by dictatorial regimes, and fought over by sectarian extremists. Stern and Berger provide context for understanding ISIS’s past and considering how its media model may affect future extremist movements.” (Kecia Ali, associate professor religion, Boston University)

“A penetrating analysis . . . The book provides important context for an evolving organization and proto-state that is attempting to rewrite the jihadi playbook.” (Aaron Zelin, Washington Institute for Near East Policy)

“*ISIS: The State of Terror* is a timely and important history of a movement that now defines the 21st century.” (Sam Kiley, Evening Standard (London))

“This book should be required reading for every politician and policymaker.” (Washington Post)

From the Back Cover

In *ISIS: The State of Terror*, two of America’s leading experts on terrorism dissect the new model for violent extremism that the Islamic State, known as ISIS, has leveraged into an empire of death in Iraq and Syria, and an international network that is rapidly expanding. Stern and Berger offer a much-needed perspective on how world leaders should prioritize and respond to ISIS’s deliberate and insidious provocations in this compelling, essential account.

“*ISIS* should be required reading for every politician and policy maker....[Stern and Berger’s] smart, granular analysis is a bracing antidote to both facile dismissals and wild exaggerations....A nuanced and readable account of the ideological and organizational origins of the group.”—Washington Post

About the Author

Jessica Stern is a research professor at Boston University’s Pardee School of Global Studies and a Fellow at the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard’s School of Public Health. She served on the Clinton administration’s National Security Council Staff. She is the author of *Denial: A Memoir of Terror; Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year); and *The Ultimate Terrorists*.

J. M. Berger is a nonresident fellow with the Brookings Institution and the author of *Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam*, a critically acclaimed history of the American jihadist movement. He is a regular contributor to *Foreign Policy* magazine and his website, Intelwire.com, has published thousands of declassified documents on the September 11 attacks and the Oklahoma City bombing.

Users Review

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Alma Young:

The feeling that you get from *ISIS: The State of Terror* could be the more deep you digging the information that hide within the words the more you get enthusiastic about reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to comprehend but *ISIS: The State of Terror* giving you buzz feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in certain way that can be understood simply by anyone who read the item because the author of this book is well-known enough. This book also makes your vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We propose you for having this specific *ISIS: The State of Terror* instantly.

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