

ISIS: The State of Terror

By Jessica Stern, J. M. Berger

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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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Praise for Jessica Stern: "Stern's firsthand encounters bring a valuable and much-needed perspective to the problem of religious violence. Timely and compelling." --*Booklist*

"[A] stunningly brave book." --*Elle*

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 Lecturer on Terrorism at Harvard University and serves on the Hoover Institution Task Force on National Security and Law. She was a member of the National Security Council Staff in 1994-95, and worked as an analyst at Livermore Lab. She is the author of *Denial: A Memoir of Terror* (selected by the *Washington Post* as a best book of the year) *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 the author of *Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam*, a critically acclaimed history of the American jihadist movement, and editor of *Beatings and Bureaucracy: The Founding Memos of al Qaeda*. He is a regular contributor to *Foreign Policy* magazine, where he wrote in 2013 about his lengthy online interactions with American jihadist Omar Hammami. Berger is a consultant and instructor for private companies and government agencies on topics such as domestic extremism and the use of Big Data to analyze how extremists use social media. His website, Intelwire.com, has published thousands of declassified documents on the September 11 attacks and the Oklahoma City bombing.

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