

# How to Win Hearts and Minds? The Political Sociology of the Support for Suicide Bombing\*

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## Abstract

I address a central debate in the theory and practice of U.S. foreign policy, whether affection and popular approval trump fear and self-interest in the promotion of the security of U.S. soldiers in Iraq. Specifically, I assess whether affection, physical insecurity, ontological insecurity, and hatred contributed to the alienation of ordinary Muslim people from the United States and the American people to the point of justifying suicide bombing attacks against Americans in Iraq. Methodologically, I employ Classification and Regression Tree (CART) models, a methodology that allows for a parsimonious identification of interactive and non-linear effects in the data. I find that disaffection towards the American people is the strongest predictor of the support for suicide bombing against Americans in Iraq. Fear for one's country and fear for one's identity as a Muslim believer are the second major sources of legitimization for suicide bombing, while anti-Semitism plays a marginal role in shaping the beliefs of those who support suicide bombing against Americans. These findings have implications for U.S. efforts to win hearts and minds in the Islamic world; they support the view of soft power advocates that is better to be loved than feared against the Machiavellian view that fear promotes respect and security.

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# Introduction

To win the hearts and minds of one's adversary is a cornerstone of counterinsurgency theory.<sup>1</sup> It is a principle recognized in the U.S. Army/Marine Corps *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (2007), the document that provided the intellectual basis for the surge, the new strategy for the U.S. war in Iraq adopted by General David Petraeus since 2007 (Ricks, 2009). Originally coined by Sir Gerald Templer, the British High Commissioner in Malaya from 1952 to 1954 (Stubbs, 1989), to win hearts and minds has become a phrase frequently invoked among policy-makers, scholars and commentators who wish to offer advice on how to address the security situation in Iraq (Mearsheimer, 2002; El-Affendi, 2005; Fukuyama, 2008).<sup>2</sup>

The popularity of the phrase, however, is not matched with a clear understanding of what it takes to win hearts and minds. Niccolò Machiavelli (2008[1532], 57–59), for example, famously argued that wise leaders that want to elicit obedience and respect would find it more advantageous to be feared rather than loved, a belief that provided one of the initial justifications for the Iraq war when, inspired by the scholarship of Bernard Lewis and the ideology of neoconservatism, the U.S. Administration of George W. Bush relied upon unforgiving shows of power to address the threat of Islamic radicalism (Lewis, 2002; Kaplan and Kristol, 2003; Hirsh, 2004; Packer, 2005). More generally, the strategy of barbarism in asymmetric warfare is underpinned by fear and intimidation (Trinquier, 1961; Arreguín-Toft, 2005). When the goal is to thwart the enemy's ability and will to fight, depredations and reprisals against civilian noncombatants have proven very effective means to achieve

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<sup>1</sup>An early reference to the expression “the hearts and minds” dates back to a reflection on the American Revolution that U.S. President John Adams penned in a letter written to Hezekiah Niles on 13 February 1818. President Adams's sentence can be found in Koch and Peden (1946, 203).

<sup>2</sup>Strategies to win hearts and minds in Iraq have been the subject of hearings in the U.S. Congress; for example, in the 108th Congress, “Iraq: Winning Hearts and Minds,” Hearing before the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations, June 15, 2004; in the 110th Congress, “Strategic Communications and the Battle of Ideas: Winning the Hearts and Minds in the Global War Against Terrorists,” Hearing before the Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, July 11, 2007. These documents are available at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/chearings/index.html>.

victory, especially when the adversary employs guerrilla warfare strategies (Arreguín-Toft, 2005). But despite its solid track record of victories, a blanket use of barbarism might backfire if the goal is not simply military victory but also long-term political control. The brutality of the strategy might also generate a revolt against the war effort in the home front of democratic countries (Merom, 2003). As Arreguín-Toft (2005, 225) pointedly concludes, “Barbarism thus sacrifices victory in peace for victory in war—a poor policy at best.”

The U.S. Army/Marine Corps *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* is less blunt; it carefully distinguishes between the two components of the phrase, the affective component of the “heart” and the cognitive component of the “mind.” As David Kilcullen (2006, 105), senior adviser to General Petraeus, writes: “‘Hearts’ means persuading people their best interests are served by your success; ‘Minds’ means convincing them that you can protect them, and that resisting you is pointless.”<sup>3</sup> The *Manual* advises soldiers on the ground to create trusted networks with the local population, local community leaders, and local security forces on the basis of common interests. Obedience and respect, in the view of the *Manual*’s writers, come from the belief in the inevitability of the Coalition Forces’ rule not from any sense of affection or sympathy. It is no surprise that the *Counterinsurgency Manual* would reach such a conclusion, given that so much that has gone wrong in Iraq (Packer, 2005; Ricks, 2006). The *Manual*’s position reflects a sense of disillusionment after the prediction that U.S. soldiers would *by default* be greeted as liberators was proven wrong.<sup>4</sup> Still, the question remains whether cooperation and trust can be sustained in the long term if they are not premised on more deep-seated allegiances and sense of affection, given that it is widely acknowledged that U.S. presence in Iraq is neither permanent nor inevitable.

Another approach follows from the logic of soft power, the ability to lead that the United

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<sup>3</sup>A slightly reworded version of this passage is found on pp. 4–5 of Appendix A of the U.S. Army/Marine Corps *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*.

<sup>4</sup>The prediction was articulated in the most influential manner by Vice President Richard Cheney in an interview with Tim Russert on NBC *Meet the Press* on 16 March 2003 and again on 14 September 2003 (transcripts available at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm> and <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3080244/>).

States derives from its ability to attract (Nye, 2004). In this case, the emphasis is on how to shape the preferences of the people whose compliance is sought, so that “they want what you want.” The logic of soft power has served as the rationale for strategies of public diplomacy, educational exchanges and engagement (Nye, 2004; Lord, 2006). The report of the American Political Science Association Taskforce on U.S. Standing in World Affairs (2009) emphasizes the role of esteem, which is defined as the perception of what the United States stands for in the hearts and minds of foreign publics, as a form of political capital with intrinsic value. Though esteem does not necessarily have readily observable behavioral implications, it is seen as an important quality that might help the United States achieve its strategic goals.<sup>5</sup> But it is still an open question to what extent soft power and esteem can be effective tools for the management of security relations. Despite the large literature it has generated, few studies have attempted to evaluate the effects of soft power tools on ideas and attitudes.<sup>6</sup> The dissent to the American Political Science Association Taskforce Report (2009, 28–29) penned by Stephen Krasner and Henry Nau specifically questions whether esteem has relevant implications for the conduct of U.S. diplomacy.

In this article, I address this central debate for the theory and practice of U.S. foreign policy. To what extent do affection or esteem engender respect and support for the United States from local populations, as opposed to fear of U.S. power? How detrimental can fear be if it turns into hatred? To answer these questions, I investigate the basis of support for indiscriminate violence used against Americans, specifically the use of suicide bombing attacks against Americans in Iraq. In particular, I assess whether the dislike of the American people, fear of the United States, religious attachments, and anti-Semitism contributed to the alienation of ordinary Muslim people from the United States and the American people to the point of justifying suicide attacks against them. The sources of social support for

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<sup>5</sup>These statements can be found on page 3 and 7 of the Taskforce Report.

<sup>6</sup>Exceptions are Atkinson (2006, 2010) and Miller (2006) who evaluated educational exchange programs as mechanism of soft power and found that they offer a positive contribution to the promotion of democracy and the respect of human rights.

suicide bombing, therefore, serve as an empirical area of investigation to evaluate how the United States can succeed in the “war of ideas” against Islamic extremism and undermine the support for a pernicious form of terrorism.

My analysis centers on the patterns of support for suicide bombing among people of Muslim religion that were residing in two Middle Eastern countries, Jordan and Lebanon, two countries in the immediate security neighborhood of Iraq. I focus on support for suicide bombing missions against Americans and other Western targets in Iraq. The year the survey was taken, 2005, reflects one of the most dangerous, and disastrous, moments in the U.S. occupation of Iraq, when the security situation for the Iraqis and the American troops bordered on a complete collapse (Packer, 2005; Ricks, 2006). “In 2005,” writes the *Washington Post* military correspondent Thomas Ricks (2009, 8), “the United States came close to losing the war in Iraq.” As the Coalition Forces were unable to guarantee order in the face of a mounting insurgency, suicide attacks against Americans became part of the tragic reality of Iraq and fed into the broader discourse of opposition to the United States.

What legitimized such extreme tactics of violence among ordinary Muslim people in two countries in the immediate neighborhood of Iraq? I show that disaffection towards the American people had reached such a level that ordinary Muslim people in Jordan and Lebanon approved of suicide bombing against Americans in Iraq. Fear for one’s country and fear for one’s identity as Muslim believers were the second major sources of legitimization for suicide bombing. Hatred and anti-Semitism, on the other hand, played a marginal role in shaping the beliefs of those who supported suicide bombing against Americans. Overall, these findings offer support to the view of soft power advocates that is better to be loved than feared against the Machiavellian view that fear promotes respect and security.

## Background on Suicide Terrorism

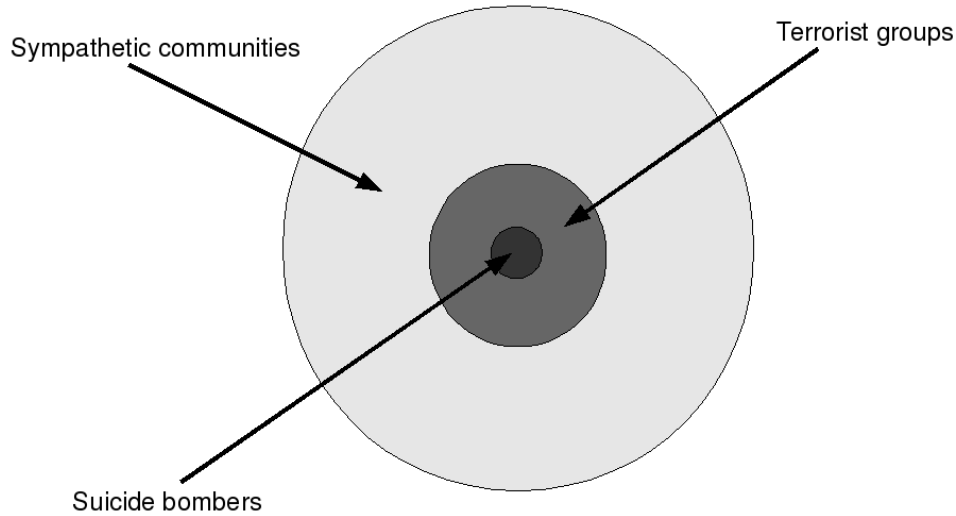
In standard definitions of terrorism, the use of violence is portrayed as an instrument “usually intended to influence an audience” (United States Department of State, 2004, xii).<sup>7</sup> The audience referred to in the definitions is predominantly the public and policy-makers in the countries that are victims of terrorist attacks. This is the audience that terrorist groups want to exercise pressure on, or frighten, to achieve their goals. This is also the audience that scholars analyze when they evaluate whether the perpetrators of terrorist actions manage to induce a policy change in the target countries (Pape, 2005) or when they evaluate the political and economic consequences of terrorist acts (Krueger, 2007).

But the audience for terrorist attacks can also be seen as the societies in whose name the perpetrators of terrorist actions claim to act. As is the case with political parties competing for the publics’ support, terrorist groups are organizations that vie for the political and moral backing of their constituents, as well as for their financial and logistic support (Weinberg and Pedahzur, 2003). Ami Pedahzur (2005, 25), for example, argues that “the decision to mobilize suicide bombers cannot be implemented without a social environment that approves of this method.” Building upon the graphical model of Cragin and Gerwehr (2005, 59), which I adapted for the case of suicide terrorism in Figure 1, we can distinguish three types of audiences: the terrorist themselves, the radical organizations that support them, and the sympathetic communities in the society at large. In their model, each audience is a potential target for an influence campaign aimed at dissuading terrorist actions. As they contend, “Although U.S. policy-makers might not be able to target the terrorists directly,

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<sup>7</sup>The topic of suicide terrorism, and international terrorism in general, has attracted large amounts of attention among scholars, pundits, policy-makers as well as the general public (United States Department of State, 2004; Bloom, 2005; Gambetta, 2005; Pape, 2005; Pedahzur, 2005; Enders and Sandler, 2006; Crenshaw, 2007; Krueger, 2007; Rasler et al., 2007). There now exists a solid base of knowledge about perpetrators of suicide terrorist attacks and their organizations. Still, the conditions that lead ordinary people to approve of suicide terrorist tactics are poorly understood (Fair and Shepherd, 2006; Bueno de Mesquita, 2007; Tessler and Robbins, 2007; Shafiq and Sinno, 2009). In a thorough assessment of the literature, Martha Crenshaw (2007, 153) summarizes the state of knowledge about the societal support for suicide terrorism in somber terms: “We do not know how much weight to accord each factor or how we might measure them.”

Figure 1: Three Audiences for Counterterrorist Influence Campaigns



NOTE: This figure is adapted from the model described in Cragin and Gerwehr (2005, 59).

influence programs that affect radical institutions or sympathetic communities may also have an indirect effect on the attitudes and beliefs of the terrorists.”<sup>8</sup>

Despite its intuitive simplicity, the Cragin and Gerwehr model offers a useful insight. It provides a helpful reminder that a “levels-of-analysis” problem might characterize the study of terrorism. Namely, the factors that might lead an individual to perpetrate terrorist actions or to volunteer for a suicide bombing mission are not necessarily the same as the ones that motivate a terrorist group to choose suicide missions among other alternatives; or as the reasons that inform the approval of the broader society or a global audience. From the point of view of a terrorist organization, for example, suicide terrorism poses a dilemma. On

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<sup>8</sup>A *New York Times* article describes the contours of a U.S. anti-terrorist strategy whereby security and intelligence forces seek to undermine the basis of support for terrorist actions among militants and the larger communities of potential sympathizers. A correct characterization of the militants’ culture, ideas, and beliefs plays an instrumental role in that strategy as a means to undermine the rhetoric of terrorist leaders (Schmitt and Shanker, 2008).

the one hand, suicide bombing attacks are, as Pedahzur and Perliger (2006, 2) document, “the most efficient way to achieve the highest number of victims.”<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the organization needs to find operatives that are skilled enough to complete the mission but not so skilled and valuable that their deaths would affect the future effectiveness of the terrorist organization itself (Bueno de Mesquita, 2005; Pape, 2005; Berman and Laitin, 2006; Moghadam, 2006). A popular contention claims that the dilemma can be solved by recruiting dispossessed or disenfranchised members of the community. But scholars have shown that, despite its popularity in the media and among policy-makers, the thesis that the people who join terrorist organizations are poor or uneducated is inconsistent with the empirical record. Rather, terrorist operatives are mostly educated members of the middle class with degrees in engineering (Krueger, 2007; Gambetta and Hertog, 2007).

At the level of the general public, Laitin and Shapiro (2008, 214–217) caution against positing a direct link between societal support for suicide terrorism and the perpetration of suicide missions. The consensus that terrorist groups tap into, generate, and exploit is to an extent a consequence and facilitating condition, rather than a cause, of the emergence of suicide terrorism. While a supportive population arguably facilitates the recruiting of operatives and the foiling of counterterrorist operations by government forces (Pape, 2005, 81–82), protracted campaigns do not necessarily require popular support. The organizations that resort to suicide terrorism are at two ends of the spectrum: they are not only the ones whose constituencies support the adoption of such extreme tactics, but also those that have no roots in any local community and use suicide attacks to intimidate local populations (Kalyvas and Sánchez-Cuenca, 2005).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>No clear consensus exists on the effectiveness of suicide bombing in advancing the goals of its perpetrators. Robert Pape (2003, 351), for example, argues that “Perhaps the most striking aspect of recent suicide terrorist campaigns is that they are associated with gains for the terrorists’ political cause about half the time.” But the research design Pape used to reach his conclusions has been seriously challenged on the ground of “selection on the dependent variable” (Ashworth et al., 2008).

<sup>10</sup>Assaf Moghadam (2006, 103) argues that recent suicide bombing campaigns in Iraq have targeted the local population in an effort to intimidate, rather than win any local support, which would mark a break from previous campaigns such as those employed in Lebanon, Israel or Sri Lanka.



Moreover, under the logic of *outbidding*, which has been most explicitly theorized by Mia Bloom (2005), suicide campaigns also generate support for an organization against rival organizations, which in turn serves as a further incentive for more suicide attacks in a cycle of escalating violence. In this dynamic, counter-terrorist strategies can also mobilize greater support for terror. In particular, counter-terrorist tactics that do not effectively discriminate between civilian bystanders and specific terrorist targets, such as assassinations using helicopter gun-ships or aerial bombardments, have been claimed to harden the support for suicide attacks in a tit-for-tat fashion. “If one side’s civilians are fair game,” writes Mia Bloom (2005, 91), “the targeted community will believe that civilians on the other side are not sacrosanct.”

For the U.S. policy-makers and military planners that have been trying to develop anti-terrorist strategies, this creates a considerable challenge. It confirms that while “Simple explanations and solutions, (...), may be more appealing and easier to grasp. They are liable to fail, however, because they ignore the underlying moral values and group dynamics that drive jihadis to suicide terrorism” (Atran, 2006, 144). It also indicates that the factors that lead ordinary people to state their approval of suicide bombing are but one “ingredient,” and probably not one that can generate immediate success in thwarting the use of suicide bombing. Strategies that disrupt recruitment and favor defection in terrorist organizations are likely to be more effective in the short term. But, if we need to imagine future threats and counter them before they manifest themselves, it is important to understand why ordinary people would approve of such extreme tactics. The reasons that have given legitimacy to the use of suicide bombing in some societies might also serve to justify other extreme tactics, such as the use of loose nuclear weapons or biological agents, in the security posture of future adversaries of the United States (see Berman and Laitin’s contribution in Rasler et al. (2007, 128)).

## Assessing the Social Support for Suicide Bombing

In my analysis, I distinguish two categories of factors that might account for the support of suicide violence against Americans. First, I consider a series of demographic indicators, from gender to education. The goal is to identify some basic characteristics of the publics that would approve of the use of suicide bombing. Second, I consider a series of factors that pertain to the attitudes, perceptions, and opinions of the publics. The goal, in this case, is to explain why ordinary people would see suicide bombing against Americans as justifiable.

The demographic indicators, a staple feature of any study aimed at evaluating the political attitudes of the mass public, likely capture alternative motivations that animate popular perceptions of suicide bombing. What upsets or enrages younger women to the point that they would approve of suicide bombing arguably differs from what upsets or enrages middle-aged men so that they reach a similar conclusion. But if these are safe predictions to make, it is more difficult to pinpoint *ex-ante* what underlying motivations would structure the variation in support for suicide attacks across different groups.

Still, the description of the demographic groups that are more inclined to find suicide bombing justifiable is a key first step that helps dispel misconceptions or contradictory claims (Shafiq and Sinno, 2009). For example, there is now consensus that perpetrators of terrorist attacks are mostly educated and middle class (Krueger, 2007). The contention that poverty and lack of education are associated with terrorism, however, persists, only applied to a different audience. In his endorsement of Alan Krueger's book, a book that delivers a serious blow to the idea that poverty and lack of education breed terrorism, the Peruvian intellectual and international bestseller Hernando de Soto claims that "The way you beat them—as we did in Peru—is not with bigger guns but with better ideas and legal reforms that win over their largest constituency, the poor." That is, poverty is now seen as a key feature of the sympathetic communities that might support terrorism.

Beyond the description of the distribution of public support for suicide bombing across

different “sub-populations” defined by demographic identifiers, I also present an analysis of the justifications for suicide bombing. In this case, I elaborate specific hypotheses regarding why ordinary men and women state their approval of suicide bombing. The factors I consider pertain to the role of emotions: affection, fear, and hatred. I investigate the emotional reactions of the general public, and depict the state of mind of those who approve of suicide attacks against Americans rather than calculation or strategic interests, the factors that have been prominent in the study of the organizational level of suicide terrorism (Laitin and Shapiro, 2008), or the psychological make-up of the supporters of suicide terrorism, which has featured prominently in the individual-level analysis of the perpetrators (Victoroff, 2005).

Specifically, I test whether ordinary men and women approve of suicide bombing against Americans in Iraq because (a) they dislike Americans so much that they wish to inflict harm to them; (b) they are so afraid of the United States that they view the use of suicide bombing as a legitimate tactic against an otherwise invincible adversary; (c) they perceive that Islam is under an existential threat that only extreme actions can address; and (d) they are anti-Semitic and support suicide bombing out of their hatred of Americans and Jews.

### **Affection**

The first factor pertains to affection, the existence of positive or negative dispositions towards the American people. Does liking or disliking Americans discriminate between supporters and opponents of suicide bombing? This conjecture goes to the heart of the soft power thesis that claims that it is better to be loved than feared, while challenging both the view of the *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (2007, 294), which claims that affection is inconsequential, and the Machiavellian view, which claims that intimidation and fear make local populations quiescent and supportive (Trinquier, 1961, 31–44).

Much is at stake in this debate. Should this hypothesis turn out to be correct, we would have an example of how lack of standing in the eyes of foreign publics might have conse-

quences for U.S. security. While it would not necessarily sway governments into adopting costly policies, low esteem of the American people would nonetheless be more than an idle irritant that can easily be dismissed. It would be reason for serious concern because it might feed into more worrisome beliefs against the United States and its people.<sup>11</sup>

The measurement of this conjecture is based on an indicator that distinguishes the survey respondents who stated a very positive or somewhat positive opinion of the American people from those who stated a very negative or somewhat negative opinion. Even in Jordan and Lebanon, two countries where around 80% of the public viewed the United States in negative terms, the image of the American people was more “balanced,” though far from entirely positive.<sup>12</sup> The disjunction between a more positive opinion of the people and a clearly negative opinion of the country, therefore, indicates an admittedly small reservoir of good will and empathy towards the Americans. Under this hypothesis, it is this empathy and affection, or lack thereof, that would drive the attitudes towards suicide bombing against Americans.

## **Fear**

The second and third factors pertain to fear and insecurity. In one case, it is the physical security of ordinary citizens and the security of their countries that is at stake. Suicide bombing might be justified as a weapon of the weak by people who view their country as a potential target of U.S. military intervention. Such fears might border on the ludicrous, as a U.S. attack on Jordan or Lebanon is largely unrealistic, but they should not be discounted for that reason. Ordinary people might legitimately assess a decrease in the security of their countries, attribute such a decrease to the United States, and view suicide bombing as an

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<sup>11</sup>Studies investigating the consequences of anti-Americanism have in general unveiled limited effects in terms of policies and behavioral choices (Keohane and Katzenstein, 2007; Datta, 2009).

<sup>12</sup>About two thirds of the Jordanians and about 47.1% of the Lebanese expressed a negative opinion.

extreme tactic that could constrain a powerful, and allegedly casualty-averse country,<sup>13</sup> such as the United States.<sup>14</sup>

Fear and security can also affect another dimension of people's well-being, which, in line with Jennifer Mitzen's (2006) analysis, I call their ontological security. By this, I mean the security ordinary people perceive with respect to their own sense of who they are. This hypothesis contends that the U.S. presence in Iraq and its Middle East policies challenges or insults people's identity as Muslim believers. Suicide bombing against Americans is then justified as a means to restore the sense of self that U.S. presence and policies allegedly undermine. U.S. officials have emphatically denied any allegation that the United States is at war with Islam;<sup>15</sup> still the contention of a fundamental opposition between the United States as the bearer of the Western civilization mantle, on the one hand, and the Islamic civilization, on the other, has currency in academic discourse (Huntington, 1996), in conservative politics in the United States (Pipes, 2002; Rubin, 2002), as well as in the propaganda of anti-American terrorists (Juergensmeyer, 2003; Stern, 2003; Johnson, 2007). Under this hypothesis, therefore, the rhetorical battle to define U.S. anti-terrorist policies since 9/11 has profound implications for the justification of extreme violence against Americans.

The measurement of this hypothesis is based on a series of indicators that assess people's concerns about their physical and ontological security, respectively. Specifically, I measure fear about physical security by identifying the Jordanians and Lebanese who (a) were very or somewhat worried that the United States could become a military threat to their country; (b) thought that the removal of Saddam Hussein from power made the world a more

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<sup>13</sup>The literature on U.S. casualty aversion originates in Mueller (1971); recent challenges to Mueller's theory are Larson (1996) and Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler (2005/06).

<sup>14</sup>A similar argument has been made by Stanford University historian David Kennedy (2008, 167) with respect to nuclear proliferation: "The [Iraq] war has alienated even traditionally reliable allies such as the core members of NATO and may convince states in the Middle Eastern region and well beyond that they must contemplate heroic measures, including the acquisition of nuclear arms, to defend themselves against the prospect of American intervention."

<sup>15</sup>A clear example can be found in President George W. Bush's speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations on September 19th, 2006 (available at <http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/09.19.06.html>).

dangerous place; and (c) opposed U.S.-led efforts to fight terrorism. For the measurement of concerns about ontological security, I identify the Jordanians and Lebanese who (a) deemed religion to be very important in their lives;<sup>16</sup> (b) who thought that Islam faced serious threats; and (c) thought that Islamic extremism did not pose a relevant threat to their country. These indicators identify the people who viewed religion as a central component of their lives, thought that Islam was under threat, and were personally comfortable with those aspects of Islam that generate most apprehension in the West. These would be the people who would mostly be concerned with their identity as Muslim, i.e. their ontological security, which would then drive their support for suicide bombing.

## **Hatred**

The last hypothesis attributes the support for suicide bombing to the presence of anti-semitic sentiments in Jordan and Lebanon. Under this hypothesis, suicide attacks against Americans are justified because Americans are “guilty by association,” as the friends of Israel and the Jewish people. Suicide bombing would then be a consequence of the diffusion of racism in Islamic societies. The measurement of such sentiments is obviously difficult, as ordinary people might be wary of openly manifesting their true opinion of other people against what is the perceived societal norm.<sup>17</sup> As I report in Figure 2, it is certainly suspicious that not a single Muslim Jordanian or Lebanese stated that they had a positive opinion of Jewish people. It is equally suspicious that not a single Muslim Jordanian or Lebanese had a negative opinion of Muslim people. As a comparison, views of Christians were mixed (and more balanced).

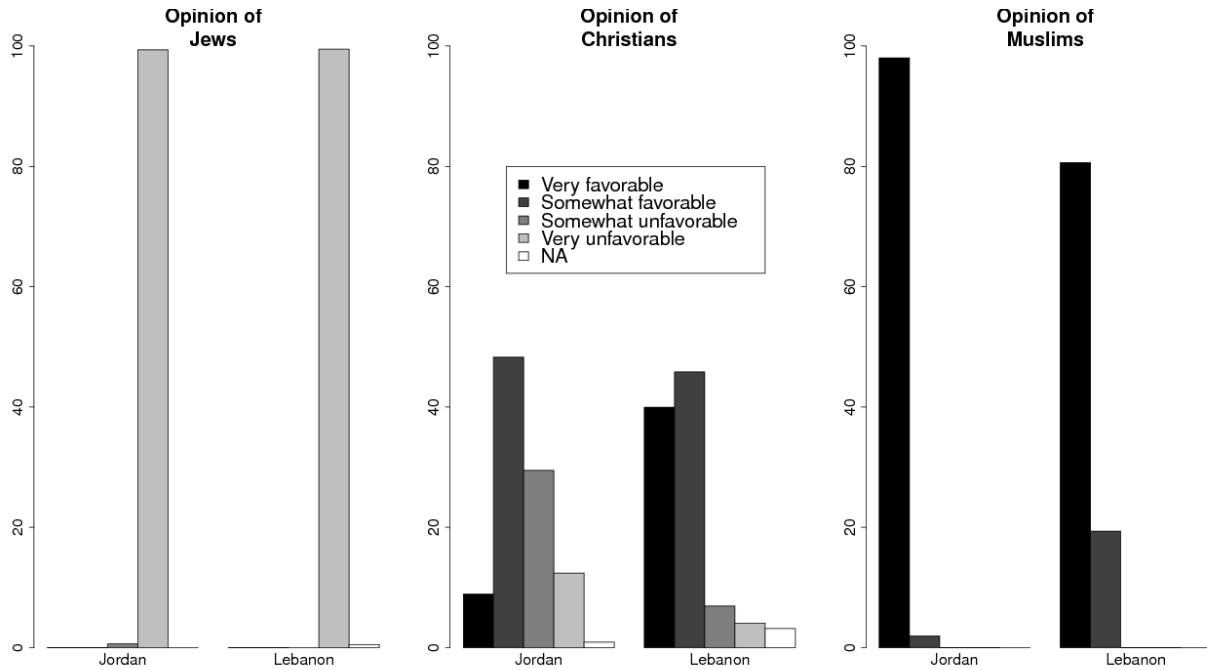
To identify the Muslim Jordanians and Lebanese that might derive their support of suicide

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<sup>16</sup>This is a concern for 86.3% of the Jordanian public and for 56.3% of the Lebanese public. No single Jordanian and only 12 Lebanese (2.1%) declared that religion was not at all important in their lives.

<sup>17</sup>This claim underpins the literature on racism and affirmative action in the United States (Sniderman and Piazza, 1993; Berinsky, 2004), as well as the seminal work of Timur Kuran (1995) on the support of revolutionary movements.

Figure 2: Opinion of Jews, Christians, and Muslims, 2005



NOTE: Data analysis is based on the 2005 wave of the Pew *Global Attitudes Survey*. “NA” stands for not available, don’t know, or refused to answer.

bombing from an anti-semitic orientation, therefore, I resort to two different indicators: (a) the belief that Jews have the most pervasive influence on U.S. foreign policy;<sup>18</sup> and (b) the belief that Judaism is the most violent religion. The first indicator captures one of the most pernicious tropes in the anti-semitic mindset, the existence of a Jewish cabal, and as such serves a useful purpose in this empirical investigation. Indeed, the view that Jews control U.S. foreign policy was the predominant view in Jordan and Lebanon, but not the view of the entire population.<sup>19</sup> The second indicator, which measures the association between Judaism and violence, was also very common in Jordan, where 74.1% of the population shared that

<sup>18</sup>The survey item in the Pew *Global Attitudes* survey offered the following choices for the groups that might influence U.S. foreign policy, with the respective percentage of selection in parenthesis: (a) the news media (6.5%); (b) business corporations (9.1%); (c) Jews (61.6%); (d) Christian conservatives (9.0%); (e) the military (3.3%); (f) liberals (3.7%); (g) ordinary Americans (5.8%); (h) don’t know/refused to answer (1.1%).

<sup>19</sup>The percentages are 61% in Jordan and 62.5% in Lebanon.

belief, but not in Lebanon, where only 13.3% did so.<sup>20</sup>

## Empirical Strategy

I rely upon survey data to assess the extent and the sources of popular support for suicide bombing. The data come from a survey conducted on behalf of the Pew Global Attitudes Project in Jordan and Lebanon in the spring of 2005. All the respondents who were administered the questions measuring attitudes towards suicide bombing were of Muslim religion.<sup>21</sup> In general, when asked about suicide terrorist attacks against Americans and other Western targets in Iraq, the general publics of both Jordan and Lebanon split in half, with slight majorities approving of attacks against the Coalition Forces in Iraq. The idea to hurt Americans with extreme means was not alien to substantial portions of the public in two Middle Eastern societies.

To analyze these data, I employ a novel approach, Classification and Regression Tree (CART) models (Therneau and Atkinson, 1997; Hastie, Tibshirani and Friedman, 2001, 266–279; Venables and Ripley, 2002, 251–269; Berk, 2008, 103–167). These models offer a graphical representation of the most likely combinations of factors that would sustain different views about the justifiability of suicide bombing, which would then allows us adjudicate between the hypotheses I presented. Each node on the classification tree states a logical condition that partitions the subjects on the basis of their response profiles on all the explanatory variables. The tree establishes a sequence in which the explanatory factors are ordered according to their level of relevance, i.e. their ability to discriminate across response profiles. The final branches report the conditional probability distribution of the depen-

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<sup>20</sup>The predominant view in Lebanon was that all religions are about the same when it comes to violence.

<sup>21</sup>Sample sizes are 967 respondents in Jordan and 563 in Lebanon. The surveys were collected through face-to-face interviews conducted between April 27, 2005 and May 24, 2005. The surveys are based on a probability sample design, representative of the adult population (18-years old and older) with a 3% margin of error (Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2005). The survey was taken before the suicide attacks in Amman, which took place on November 9th, 2005. The attacks killed 57 people and injured about 300 (BBC News, 2005).



dent variable given a profile of explanatory variables. In practice, the final branches report how many respondents supported or did not support suicide bombing against Americans, from which we can infer the overall attitude—i.e., whether the public finds suicide bombing justifiable or not—that a given path is more likely to generate.<sup>22</sup>

A major strength of CART models is the ability to model non-linearities and interactive relations, while avoiding making heroic (and unrealistic) assumptions about the stochastic processes underlying the data (Berk, 2004, 212–215). Regression analysis, the most common modeling approach for survey data, is particularly ill-suited in this respect.<sup>23</sup> Even minor violations to the assumption of linear relations lead to erroneous conclusions (Achen, 2005).<sup>24</sup> Moreover, CART models do not generate the often derided, but always sought after, “stars,” that is the levels of statistical significance that are routinely invoked to claim that a given variable is influential.<sup>25</sup> Instead, by providing a representation of how explanatory factors interact as well as the sample size at each terminal node, CART models better convey the “detailed substantive knowledge of our observations” that Achen (2005, 338) advocates, while avoiding any mechanical conclusion based on conventional thresholds of significance.

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<sup>22</sup>The number on the left counts the respondents who viewed suicide bombing as *NOT* justifiable; the number on the right counts the respondents who viewed suicide bombing as justifiable. The labels at the end of the tree (“Yes” and “No”) indicate whether a given combination of factors would support or not support suicide bombing.

<sup>23</sup>Regression analysis is unquestionably a powerful data synthesis technique. The number of empirical results that depend upon it is so extensive that the logic of regression analysis informs proper research practice in qualitative research (King, Keohane, and Verba, 1994). Still, regression analysis assumes *a great deal* about how the data were generated. Richard Berk (2004, 1) puts it best: “If one looks carefully at regression analysis and the empirical questions it is supposed to answer, the data too often are dominated by information of doubtful quality brought to the analysis from the outside.” More pointedly, Berk (2004, 203) concludes his analysis of regression modeling with a scathing indictment: “In the eyes of a growing number of knowledgeable observers, the practice of regression analysis and its extensions is a disaster.” Christopher Achen (2005, 336) concurs: “We need to stop believing much of the empirical work we’ve been doing. And we need to stop doing it that way.”

<sup>24</sup>Interestingly, CART models is one of the approaches recommended by Achen (2005, 337) for data with “a variety of statistical regimes in them,” i.e. interactive relations. Applications of CART models in political science include Gleditsch and Ward (1997) and Chiozza (2009). A very illuminating example also appeared in the *New York Times* on April 16, 2008 to analyse the different sources of support for Senator Clinton and Senator Obama during the Democratic Party primaries, available at [http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2008/04/16/us/20080416\\_OBAMA\\_GRAPHIC.html?scp=1&sq=%22decision%20tree%22&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2008/04/16/us/20080416_OBAMA_GRAPHIC.html?scp=1&sq=%22decision%20tree%22&st=cse).

<sup>25</sup>The criticism of null hypothesis significance testing is well-established and firmly grounded in statistical theory (Berger and Sellke, 1987; Cohen, 1994; Gill, 1999; Sellke, Bayarri, and Berger, 2001; Berger, 2003).

In more detail, Classification and Regression Tree (CART) models represent a class of computational algorithms that partition the space  $X$  of possible observations (Therneau and Atkinson, 1997; Hastie, Tibshirani and Friedman, 2001, 266–279; Venables and Ripley, 2002, 251–269; Berk, 2008, 103–167). In the models I estimated in this article, I analyzed a binary outcome variable coded 1 if the respondent thought that suicide bombing against Americans and other Western targets in Iraq was justifiable, and coded 0 if the respondent thought it was not justifiable. The goal of the computational algorithm is to classify the observations in either class  $k = 1$ , or  $k = 0$  on the basis of the explanatory factors included in the models.

The computation algorithm follows a recursive process: it first finds the variable that splits the data “best;” it then repeats this procedure separately on each subgroup; it finally stops when either the groups reach a minimum size or no further classification improvement can be obtained.<sup>26</sup> The splits are therefore selected one step at a time. The CART models only allow for binary splits: i.e., for continuous explanatory variables the splits are of the form  $x_j < t$  versus  $x_j \geq t$ ; for dichotomous explanatory variables the splits are of the form  $x_j = 1$  versus  $x_j = 0$ . The “best” split is selected at each node  $m$  on the basis of the minimization of an impurity criterion,  $Q_m(T)$ . In models presented below, I used the Gini Index:

$$Q_m(T) = \sum_{k=1}^K \hat{p}_{mk}(1 - \hat{p}_{mk}) \quad (1)$$

where  $\hat{p}_{mk}$  is defined as:

$$\hat{p}_{mk} = \frac{1}{N_m} \sum_{x_i \in R_m} I(y_i = k) \quad (2)$$

That is,  $\hat{p}_{mk}$  is the probability that an observation at node  $m$  is classified in class  $k = 0, 1$ , and  $R_m$  is the region identified by the split.

The classification algorithm then produces a tree  $T_0$  with  $|T_0|$  terminal nodes. To avoid overfitting the data and producing models with too much detail to be useful, the CART

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<sup>26</sup>I set the minimum number of observations that must exist in a node in order for a split to be attempted at 30; and the minimum number of observations in any terminal node at 10.

model algorithm includes a complexity parameter  $\alpha$ . We then compute a function, called “cost complexity,” that includes a penalty for complexity:

$$C_\alpha(T) = \sum_{m=1}^{|T|} N_m Q_m(T) + \alpha|T| \quad (3)$$

Larger values of the complexity parameter  $\alpha$  generate smaller trees (fewer branches), while smaller values of  $\alpha$  generate more complex trees, i.e. trees with larger number of branches. For each  $\alpha$  we select the subtree  $T_\alpha \subseteq T_0$  that minimizes the cost complexity function,  $C_\alpha(T)$ .

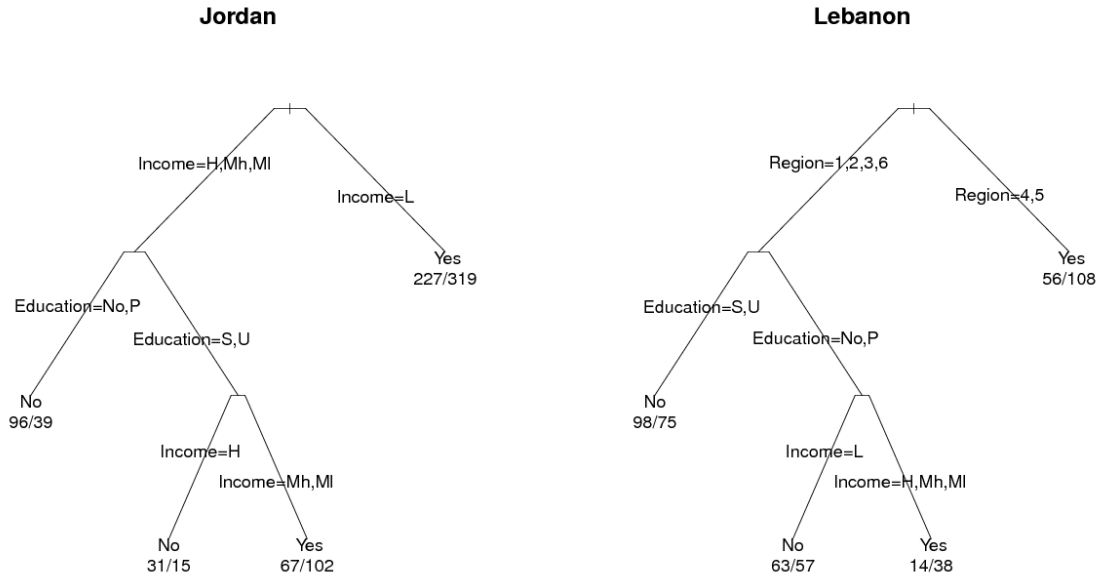
More complex trees have fewer classification errors, but have greater instability given that they generate terminal nodes with fewer observations. Simpler trees generate more classification errors, i.e. have more bias, but they are more stable and, importantly, more readable. The goal is to strike a balance between these two competing goals (Berk, 2008, 129–130). To achieve this, I estimated the models using a 10-fold cross-validation criterion: I split the data in 10 equally sized parts; 9 are used to “grow” the tree, and the 10th part is used to test it. The choice of  $\alpha$  is, then, based upon the cross-validation error rate by selecting approximately an  $\alpha$  parameter within 1-standard deviation of the minimum cross-validation error rate, which yielded, in the case at hand, sharp and informative, and not too complex, models of the data.

Finally, missing values are handled by using “surrogate” predictors. At each node, the algorithm selects the “best” variable and split using the observations for which that variable is not missing. It then selects a list of alternative variables that best mimic the primary variable and split. If an observation contains missing data on the primary variable and split, it is then allocated on the basis of the surrogate splits. In other words, surrogate splits take advantage of the correlations between variables.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Missing values on the dependent variable are excluded from the analysis. This affects 71 observations in the Jordanian sample and 54 observations in the Lebanese sample. Therefore, the CART models classify 896 observations in the Jordanian sample and 509 observations in the Lebanese sample.

Figure 3: Demographic Profile of the Support for Suicide Bombing against Americans



LEGEND:

Education U=University; S=Secondary; P=Primary; No=None

Income H=High; Mh=Medium high; Ml=Medium low; L=Low

Region 1=West Beirut; 2=East Beirut; 3=North; 4=South; 5=Bekaa; 6=Mount Lebanon

NOTE: Data analysis is based on the 2005 wave of the Pew *Global Attitudes Survey*. The labels below the final branches indicate the most common response: “No” indicates disapproval of suicide bombing; “Yes” indicates approval of suicide bombing. The number on the left counts the respondents who viewed suicide bombing as *NOT* justifiable; the number on the right counts the respondents who viewed suicide bombing as justifiable.

## Findings: Demographic Profiles

In Figure 3, I present the CART models assessing the demographic profiles of the supporters of suicide bombing against Americans. Starting from the Jordanian sample, on the left side of Figure 3, I find that support for suicide bombing was more likely to be concentrated (a) among poor people; (b) and among middle class people with secondary or university-level education. In more detail, income level is the first variable selected in the CART model. There were 546 individuals classified as poor; of these 319 declared that they believed that suicide bombing against Americans was legitimate while 227 opposed it, a percentage of

58.4%. The conventional wisdom linking poverty to terrorism, challenged by Alan Krueger (2007) in his analysis of terrorist organizations and perpetrators, finds support among ordinary Jordanians.

The second major split in the CART model pertains to education. This split classifies the 350 Jordanians who were not poor (39.1% of the total sample). Of these, the ones with no formal education or with primary-level education were predominantly opposed to suicide bombing, at a ratio of 2.5 against for every person in support;<sup>28</sup> those with secondary- or university-level education, on the other hand, were further classified on the basis of their income. In line with Krueger’s findings, I find that the educated middle-classes predominantly supported suicide bombing: 102 in support, 67 against (60.4%). The educated rich – a small minority in the entire sample (5.1%) – were instead mostly opposed to suicide bombing: 15 in support, 31 against (32.6%).<sup>29</sup>

In Lebanon, as we observe on the right tree in Figure 3, support for suicide bombing against Americans was primarily concentrated in the South and in the Bekaa region, where the Shia terrorist and social work organization Hezbollah is most prominent.<sup>30</sup> There were 164 individuals (29.1% of the sample) residing in these two regions of Lebanon; of these 65.9% were in support of suicide bombing. No other demographic variable was able to further classify these individuals in the CART model. On the one hand, the Lebanese residing in the South and in the Bekaa regions were nearly exclusively poor or lower middle class. On the other hand, the distribution of other demographic identifiers (i.e, gender, education, age, family status) was more balanced, which indicates that support was as likely across

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<sup>28</sup>This figure is obtained by computing  $\frac{96}{39} = 2.46$ .

<sup>29</sup>The CART findings add nuance to the overall patterns obtained with regression modeling in Shafiq and Sinno (2009, 16), who found that primary and secondary education encourage support for suicide bombing, while greater income discourages support. This is an example of the type of interactive and non-linear relations that easily emerge through CART modeling, while obscured in regression models.

<sup>30</sup>Hezbollah is included in the list of foreign terrorist organizations (FTO) designated by the U.S. Secretary of State in accordance with section 219 of the U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). The list is available at <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>.

demographic groups.<sup>31</sup>

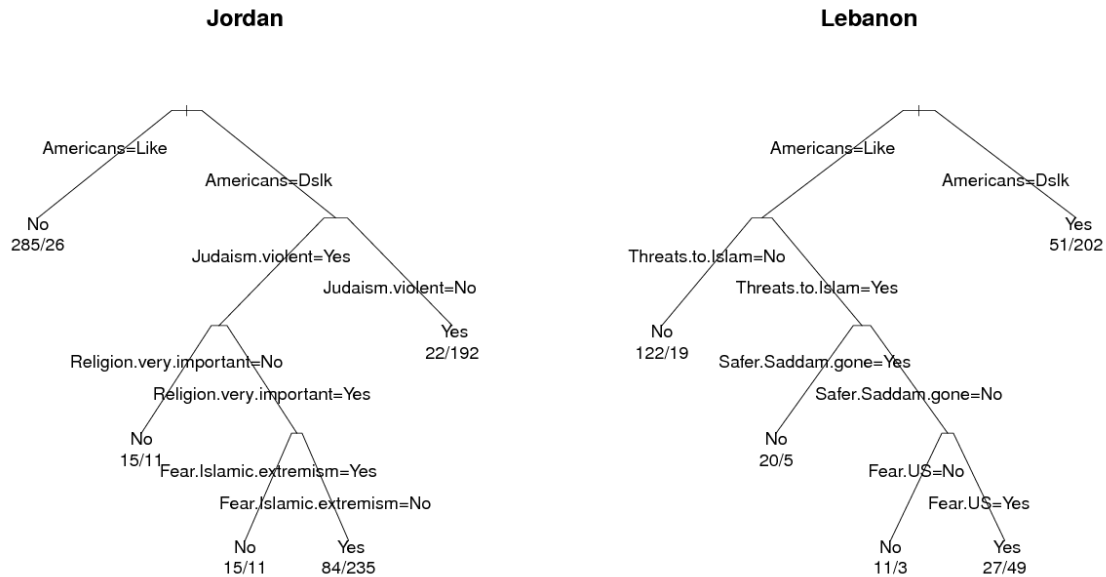
Outside the South and the Bekaa regions, suicide bombing against Americans found greater support among those members of the middle and higher classes with lower levels of education (73.1% in support). Conversely, the Muslim Lebanese with at least secondary-level education and the poor with at most primary education were more likely to oppose suicide bombing against Americans.

Overall, the demographics of the support for suicide bombing primarily depended on income and education, while gender, age and family status had no explanatory power in the CART models. The impact of income and education, though, defies simple characterizations (Shafiq and Sinno, 2009). The poor were clearly a major constituency for suicide bombing in Jordan. In Lebanon, this was the case only among the poor residing in the areas where Hezbollah is strongest. Educational levels also worked at cross-purposes in the two Middle Eastern countries under investigation: as an impediment in Lebanon and as a facilitator in Jordan. Poverty and lack of education, therefore, should be kept separate in the analysis of the societal basis for terrorism, because whatever determines the beliefs of the poor is not necessarily the same as what drives the beliefs of the uneducated. Moreover, the CART models show that educational levels had an impact on support for suicide bombing against Americans not in isolation but *in conjunction* with income. When the economist de Soto connects poverty to support for terrorism in the Peruvian case, he likely makes a valid point, whose generalizability however is questioned in the case of ordinary Muslim people in Jordan and Lebanon.

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<sup>31</sup>For example, the education levels of those residing in the South and the Bekaa regions were similar to those found in the rest of Lebanon, specifically 9.4% with no education; 38.2% with primary education; 37.1% with secondary education; and 15.3% with university education.

Figure 4: The Effects of Affection, Fear, and Hatred on Suicide Bombing



LEGEND:

Americans Dslk=Respondent dislikes the American people; Like=Repondent likes the American people

Judaism.violent Does respondent believe that Judaism is the most violent religion?

Religion.very.important Is religion very important in respondent's life?

Fear.islamic.extremism Does respondent fear Islamic extremism?

Threats.to.Islam Does respondent believe that there are serious threats to Islam?

Safer.Saddam.gone Does respondent believe that the world is safer after the removal of Saddam Hussein from power?

Fear.US Does respondent believe that the United States might become a military threat to their country?

NOTE: Data analysis is based on the 2005 wave of the Pew *Global Attitudes Survey*. See also Note to Figure 3 on page 19.

## Findings: Attitudinal Profiles

What is the attitudinal profile of the supporters of suicide bombing against Americans? To address this question, and evaluate the hypotheses I elaborated regarding the “state of mind” of supporters and opposers of suicide bombing against Americans, I estimated two CART models, reported in Figure 4, where I included both the attitudinal and the demographic variables.<sup>32</sup>

The major finding from Figure 4 is that, in both the Jordanian and the Lebanese case,

<sup>32</sup>The models in Figure 4 are, in other words, full models, in which the models in Figure 3 are nested.

the strongest predictor of support for suicide bombing against Americans is the sense of affection ordinary people have towards the American people. Overwhelmingly, the Jordanians who had a positive opinion of Americans did not find suicide bombing against them legitimate; conversely, among the Lebanese, those who disliked Americans were also willing to endorse suicide attacks against them. The emotion of affection shaped the attitudes in both Middle Eastern countries. Very few individuals did not confirm the pattern that affection engendered. Specifically, there were only 26 individuals (8.4%) who approved of suicide bombing *despite liking* the American people in Jordan, while there were 51 individuals (20.2%) who *disliked* the American people and nonetheless disapproved of suicide bombing in Lebanon. With such a discriminating power, harboring a negative opinion of the American people clearly emerged as a key factor in structuring opinion towards suicide bombing. Affection, or the lack thereof, created an emotional detachment sufficient to find suicide bombing attacks as legitimate.

Beyond the similar effects of affection, the patterns in Jordan and Lebanon diverged. In Jordan, we find a very small and specific group of people who stated their opposition to suicide bombing: those that, despite disliking Americans and despite viewing Judaism as the most violent religion, under-rated the importance of religion in their lives and were fearful of Islamic extremism. These Jordanians had a more secular orientation than most of their compatriots and expressed a negative view of Islamic extremism as much as most Americans would do. Regardless of their manifest anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism, a secular orientation delegitimized suicide bombing. Anti-Semitism, on the other hand, only had a marginal role. As we observe, in the second branch of the CART model for Jordan, disliking Americans was per se sufficient to support suicide bombing, even when disagreeing with the proposition that Judaism was the most violent religion.<sup>33</sup> In the Lebanese case, the

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<sup>33</sup>This finding also illustrates the ability of CART modeling to detect non-linear relationships, and thus avoid incorrect inferences. As I report in Table A, the coefficient on the variable measuring beliefs about Judaism is negative and significant. A superficial reading of that result would indicate that Jordanians with anti-Semitic beliefs were less likely to support suicide bombing attacks. The CART model in Figure 4



de-legitimization of suicide bombing engendered by affection was reversed for the individuals that *simultaneously* believed that Islam was under threat, felt that their country was less secure after the U.S. deposition of Saddam Hussein from power, and feared that the United States might attack their country. In this case, the combination of physical and ontological insecurity led 49 (out of 76, 64.5%) Lebanese to change their views about suicide bombing. A sense of ontological insecurity, such as the belief that Islam was under threat, led ordinary men and women to justify suicide bombing when it combined with an increased sense of physical insecurity for their countries. The Lebanese who felt less secure after Saddam Hussein’s removal from power and who, at the same time, believed that the United States was a threat to their countries, predominantly reached the conclusion that suicide bombing was a justifiable tactic against Americans. In other words, among the Lebanese, suicide bombing “resonated” when a sense of religious and political insecurity defined the personal attitudes of ordinary people.

## Analysis of Model Fit

The models in Figures 3 and 4 deliver powerful results. But how do they fit the data? To address this question, I employ a variant of the common classification tables used in parametric models with dichotomous dependent variables. These tables, which are usually called “CART confusion tables,” tabulate the data against the classes predicted by the CART model (Berk, 2008, 108–110). The classification table provides three pieces of information: (a) the overall error, i.e. the overall proportion of observations classified incorrectly, the figure underlined in the lower right corner of the table; (b) the model error, i.e. the proportion of observations incorrectly classified per *observed* class; and (c) the use error, i.e. the proportion of observations incorrectly classified per *predicted* class. Each number highlights a different

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clarifies how that finding obtains in the data by showing that the belief in the violent nature of Judaism does not alter the effects of disliking the American people. That only occurs when two additional conditions hold, which identify Jordanians with a more secular outlook.

aspect of how the CART model fits the data. A low overall error is obviously a desirable feature of the model.

In this respect, as I show in Table 1 (on page 26), the model of the Attitudinal Profiles in Figure 4 provides an excellent performance with about 17% and 21% of the observations incorrectly classified in the Jordan and Lebanon data, respectively. That is an improvement of about 20 percentage points over the simpler model of Demographic Profiles from Figure 3. As a comparison, if we were to predict whether an individual would support suicide bombing from the distribution of the dependent variable itself, we would make a classification error 47% and 45% of the time in the Jordanian and Lebanese samples, respectively. A logit regression model, which would be the most common modeling alternative, would yield an overall error rate equal to 0.45 for the Jordanian sample and to 0.46 in the Lebanese sample.<sup>34</sup>

The Model error, in the third column of each panel in Table 1, shows how likely the CART model is to misclassify an observation in a known class. In general, there is a larger number of “false positives,” i.e. cases where the model predicts support for suicide bombing when the observation was actually coded as opposition to suicide bombing. The exception to this pattern occurs in the demographic model for Lebanon, where the CART model generates about 1.9 as many “false negatives” as false positives. As we move to the model with the attitudinal variables, we observe large improvements in the Model error rates. Column percentages, or Use error rates, finally, show how often a prediction will be incorrect. For example, if we were to claim that a given respondent would oppose suicide bombing given her demographic profile in the Jordanian sample, we would be incorrect 30% of the time. If we were to consider her attitudinal profile as well, however, we would be incorrect only 13% of the time. Overall, we can conclude that the attitudinal profiles models for both Jordan

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<sup>34</sup>These results were obtained estimating a logit regression model that included all the predictors used in the Attitudinal Profiles model. Given that all the variables were entered as factor variables, the logit model included 29 variables. In other words, the logit regression models cannot match the simplicity and predictive power of the CART models. The results are presented in Table A in the Appendix attached at the end of the manuscript.

Table 1: CART Classification Table<sup>a</sup>

<i>Demographic Profiles</i>						
	<b>Jordan</b>			<b>Lebanon</b>		
	Predicted		Model	Predicted		Model
	Oppose SB	Support SB	error	Oppose SB	Support SB	error
Oppose SB	127	294	0.70	161	70	0.30
Support SB	54	421	0.11	132	146	0.47
Use error	0.30	0.41	<u>0.39</u>	0.45	0.32	<u>0.40</u>
<i>Attitudinal Profiles</i>						
	<b>Jordan</b>			<b>Lebanon</b>		
	Predicted		Model	Predicted		Model
	Oppose SB	Support SB	error	Oppose SB	Support SB	error
Oppose SB	315	106	0.25	153	78	0.34
Support SB	48	427	0.10	27	251	0.10
Use error	0.13	0.20	<u>0.17</u>	0.15	0.24	<u>0.21</u>

<sup>a</sup> Data summarize model fit of the CART models in Figures 3 and 4, respectively. The figure underlined in the lower right corner represents the overall error rate; for example,  $\frac{294+54}{294+54+127+421} = .39$ . Model error rates are computed as row percentages of observations misclassified; for example,  $\frac{294}{294+127} = .70$ . Use error rates are computed as column percentages of observations misclassified; for example,  $\frac{54}{54+127} = .30$ . SB stands for “suicide bombing against Americans.”

and Lebanon offer an adequate fit to the data.

## Conclusions

In this article, I analyzed how the United States can win hearts and minds of ordinary Muslim men and women by analyzing how three different emotions—affection, fear, and hatred—shaped the desire to hurt Americans with extreme means. I showed that suicide bombing against Americans in Iraq was more likely to be justified among Jordanians and Lebanese who disliked the American people, or among Jordanians and Lebanese who felt their countries and their religion under threat, while the sentiments of hatred and anti-Semitism played a

more marginal role.

In the long standing controversy between love vs. fear in obtaining the compliance of political subjects, these findings clearly side with “love.” The empathy and engagement fostered by a positive image of the American people discouraged beliefs that are detrimental to the security and well-being of the United States. Fear mattered too, but in a manner that is antithetical to the Machiavellian logic that justified the initial responses of the George W. Bush administration to the threat of Islamic extremism (Kaplan and Kristol, 2003; Halper and Clarke, 2004; Norton, 2004). Fear of the United States did not foster compliance or subordination; rather, it fostered the support for one of the direst and most unsettling forms of violence, suicide bombing attacks.

I also showed that anti-Semitism marginally contributed to the legitimization of suicide attacks against Americans. On the one hand, this finding is certainly reassuring. We would be concerned that hatred would make the support for extreme tactics more deep-seated and enduring. On the other hand, the fact remains that the diffusion of anti-Semitic sentiments was very widespread in both Jordan and Lebanon, even in the survey data under analysis here, to make it a discriminating factor. In the case of Jordan, my analysis identified a small section of the society that disapproved of suicide bombing *despite* overt anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism. This occurred for the individuals that manifested a more secular orientation.

These findings have implications for how the United States shapes its strategy to win hearts and minds in the Islamic world. As soft power and public diplomacy advocates maintain (Nye, 2004; Lord, 2008), it pays to promote a positive image of the United States and its people. But it also pays to reassure ordinary people in the Middle East that the United States is not an imperial and exploitative country, disdainful of the needs and interests of ordinary people in the region. Preposterous though they might seem for ordinary Americans, those fears shaped the collective imagination of large portions of the Islamic publics in

a manner that is detrimental to the war of ideas between the United States and Islamic radicalism. It will take time, energy, resources, commitment, and leadership to mend the distrust that surrounds the United States in the Middle East (Lynch, 2007). But the United States should be mindful that when it was facing a serious crisis in Iraq in 2005, fear generated a desire to hurt, while affection generated opposition to violence.

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## Appendix

As a concession to the power of the status-quo in quantitative modeling, Table A reports the findings obtained by estimating two logit regression models. The large coefficient and standard error on the variable measuring Support for Anti-terrorist policies in Lebanon is due to the existence of an empty cell problem, that is all the Lebanese who support U.S. anti-terrorist policies oppose suicide bombing (Zorn, 2005). The large coefficient and standard error on the variable identify respondents in Region 6 (Mount Lebanon) is due to the (extremely) small sample size.

Table A: Logit Regression Models<sup>a</sup>

	Jordan			Lebanon		
	b	se	p	b	se	p
Intercept	-0.868	1.327	0.513	-15.686	791.493	0.984
Is religion very important? Yes	0.316	0.384	0.411	0.067	0.338	0.843
Is Judaism violent? Yes	-1.494	0.349	0.000	0.414	0.557	0.458
Do fear the US? Yes	1.634	0.335	0.000	1.103	0.582	0.058
Are you safer with Saddam gone? Yes	0.414	0.428	0.333	-1.259	0.522	0.016
Do you fear Islamic extremism? Yes	-1.028	0.374	0.006	0.070	0.789	0.930
Jewish influence on US foreign policy	0.524	0.240	0.029	0.240	0.382	0.529
Support US anti terrorist policies	-0.008	0.641	0.990	16.937	791.491	0.983
Like Americans? Yes	-2.562	0.393	0.000	-1.027	0.361	0.004
Are there threats to Islam? Yes	0.900	0.491	0.067	2.195	0.500	0.000
Female	-0.425	0.224	0.058	-0.051	0.322	0.875
Education, Primary	0.668	0.351	0.057	-0.214	0.588	0.716
Education, Secondary	0.890	0.373	0.017	-1.055	0.631	0.094
Education, College	0.635	0.525	0.226	-0.450	0.826	0.586
Age	0.000	0.016	0.998	-0.023	0.019	0.222
Income, Low	0.450	0.424	0.289	-1.218	0.879	0.166
Income, Medium high	-0.104	0.477	0.828	-0.258	0.936	0.783
Income, Medium low	0.564	0.493	0.253	0.174	0.896	0.846
Married	-0.291	0.544	0.593	-0.573	0.533	0.283
Never married	-0.335	0.675	0.620	-0.188	0.693	0.786
Children, 1	0.130	0.430	0.763	-0.924	0.426	0.030
Children, 2	-0.132	0.304	0.665	-0.022	0.426	0.959
Children, 3	0.061	0.361	0.866	-0.588	0.678	0.386
Children, 3+	-0.079	0.323	0.807	-1.238	0.953	0.194
Region, 2	0.184	0.250	0.462	-0.433	1.062	0.683
Region, 3	0.137	0.360	0.704	-0.339	0.538	0.529
Region, 4				0.108	0.444	0.807
Region, 5				-0.234	0.462	0.612
Region, 6				15.320	6522.639	0.998

<sup>a</sup> Regions are coded as follows: *Jordan*, 2=Center, 3=South (whereby 1=North serves as the baseline); *Lebanon*, 2=East Beirut; 3=North; 4=South; 5=Bekaa; 6=Mount Lebanon (whereby 1=West Beirut serves as the baseline).