

## **PUSHES AND PULLS: WHY WESTERN WOMEN MIGRATE TO THE ISLAMIC STATE**

Billy McGrath

### **INTRODUCTION**

In June of 2014, after a surprise offensive that captured swaths of territory of western Iraq, the jihadist militant group the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) declared itself a caliphate, claiming total governance over the international Muslim community. ISIS members practice a branch of Sunni Islam known as Salafism, which seeks to emulate the “pious predecessors”<sup>1,2</sup> and foretells a militant path to the Day of Judgment. In the first year after the caliphate’s declaration, roughly 4,000 Westerners migrated to ISIS-controlled territory in Iraq and Syria. Of those 4,000, over 550 were female.<sup>3</sup> To many in the West, it seems deeply contradictory why someone would migrate to ISIS. Especially confusing for many are what processes could prompt women to travel to ISIS, giving up many freedoms for a radical Islamic lifestyle.

Research by journalists and scholars has since targeted the radicalization process and recruitment methods that might lead women to emigrate from the West and join ISIS. What is of great deal of additional interest is what role women play once they do join the militant organization. However, due to ISIS’s relative secrecy and the lack of fluidity through its borders, research into the role that women play in the Islamic State is difficult and information is sparse. A variety of theories seek to explain why women choose to join ISIS. On one hand, there are factors that entice many women to join the Islamic State— otherwise known as ‘pull’ factors. Some scholars in this camp suggest that women migrate to the caliphate in hopes of marrying the masculine jihadi fighters that are glorified on the pages of propaganda magazines and in the reels of propaganda videos. Others point to online predator-like tactics that ISIS recruiters use to target the vulnerabilities and insecurities of Muslim girls that feel ostracized or unloved in their Western communities. On the other hand, there are factors that drive women out of their states of origin - into the grasp and under the control of the Islamic State, which are known as ‘push’ factors. Scholars that have fleshed out this subject have painted female migrants as deeply faithful women who reject the Western view of women’s rights and desire to live and serve under Sharia Law. Female migrants to ISIS come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, age ranges, ethnicities, family situations, and locations, just like the males that choose to take up arms under the Islamic State, and their motivations are multi-causal and vary from case to case.<sup>4</sup>

Billy McGrath is a sophomore at Dartmouth College and is majoring in Quantitative Social Science and minoring in Computer Science. This paper was written in the Winter of 2017 for Professor Gillis’s class, “Reporting the Arab Spring.”

## ISLAMIC STATE FACTORS PULLING WOMEN TO JOIN

### A. *DESIRE TO HELP THE ISLAMIC STATE*

An ideological impetus exists to propel women to migrate to the Islamic State. Migration to ISIS-held territory in order to fill support roles is incentivized through a combination of effective propaganda and alienation in their homeland. While women are left out of the fighting in ISIS, some of them take great pleasure in killing and acts of terror by the Islamic State. One woman tweeted, “Happy #9/11 Happiest day of my life. Hopefully more to come InSha Allah #IS.”<sup>5</sup> Another, Australian migrant Zehra Duman, frequently calls on her Western followers to commit acts of terror or killings in their home countries. In one tweet, she wrote, “Kill Kuffar in alleyways, stab them and poison them. Poison your teachers. Go to haram restaurants and poison the food in large quantities.”<sup>6</sup> Another borrowed a quote from Osama bin Laden about violence towards the West, tweeting, “If killing those who kill our children is called terrorism, then I am proud to be a terrorist – Sheikh Osama Bin Laden.”<sup>7</sup> These tweets, glorifying violence and commemorating terrorist attacks on the West, have the potential to work in a few different ways. The posts could inspire homegrown terrorism in Western countries and increase the amount of pro-ISIS propaganda online, serving to connect with other men and women who feel that the West deserves to fall victim to violent attacks.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, for Western women who may be thinking about migrating to ISIS but are given pause by some of the more horrific acts of violence committed by the Islamic State, these posts normalize acts of terror. The tactic of normalizing life in ISIS can be seen in the posts about the daily lives of women, trying to make women more comfortable with a life that will be vastly different from what they are used to in the West.<sup>9</sup> Through posting positive messages about ISIS killings, the women may be trying to make potential recruits more comfortable with the prospects of violence.

Some have also shared their excitement to contribute to the ISIS cause by birthing and raising the next generation of jihadis. ISIS propaganda to recruit women has increasingly included messages about the importance of women in the continuation of the Islamic State. Umm Ubaydah tweets, “Allah fashioned men to endure jihad with strength, just like He fashioned women to bare children & He loves those who take care of their duty // The best thing a man can do is jihad, and the best thing for a woman is to be a righteous wife and to raise righteous children.”<sup>1011</sup> From a practical stance, if migration tapers ISIS does not have a next generation of members without women. However, women take more pride in their role beyond merely giving birth. They also have the responsibility of raising their children and molding the minds of the future of the Islamic State, whether it be a daughter to fulfill the same roles that they inhabit or a son to go out and fight in the holy war.

### B. *DESIRE FOR COMMUNITY*

Women are also pulled to ISIS by the sense of sisterhood and feelings of belonging that the Islamic State promises. As discussed earlier, one pushing factor for

women is a feeling of rejection from Western culture. Ostracization from Western society and culture provides women a motivation to seek acceptance from the welcoming Islamic State. In the Islamic State, there is the promise of finding acceptance. Images from ISIS members show women in hijab with captions referring to each other as “sisters” or “family”.<sup>12,13,14</sup> Women that have felt detached from the community in which they have grown up are drawn to these displays of unity and camaraderie. Women also speak of the comfort they find in the company of their sisters during iddah, the period of mourning after being widowed, or when carrying out the tasks of everyday life.<sup>15</sup>

Another pull to the Islamic State is the utopian vision that is put forth in ISIS propaganda. Ideological propaganda is a powerful tool utilized by ISIS in order to lure Western women into its influence. Because the propaganda establishes an imperative for women to migrate to the caliphate if they are capable of doing so, women are implored to fulfill their duty as supporters of ISIS through migration. The region is touted as a safe haven for those who want to practice Islam in what they see as its purest form. Furthermore, after declaring a caliphate, propaganda and recruiters have made it clear that all women who are able are obligated to migrate to the Islamic State.<sup>16</sup> A British ISIS migrant, who has been prominent in the recruitment of other Western women, tweeted out to her followers, “Seriously the muslims who are living in the west [sic] better make hijra if they are able. After [sic] Allah provided us a khilafa theres just no excuse”.<sup>17</sup> Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State, has called on women in his official speeches to come and take up their part in the mission of ISIS.<sup>18</sup> Just as men have their duty to fight to expand the Caliphate and thus must migrate to the Islamic State, women have their duty in the fight as well.

### *C. PURSUIT OF A HUSBAND*

In January of 2016, *CNN* ran an article titled “Isis using ‘Jihotties’ to recruit brides for fighters”.<sup>19</sup> The article received much backlash, though it was not the first of its kind: in 2015, *BBC News* and *Newsweek* respectively published the articles “Attractive jihadist can lure UK girls to extremism” and “ISIS ‘Using Paedophile Grooming Tactics’ to Lure Young Jihadi Brides.”<sup>20,21</sup> The arguments made in these articles are gendered; the same arguments would not and have not been made about men that choose to migrate to the Islamic State. Simon Cottee disagreed with the “jihottie” narrative in his piece “What ISIS Women Want”.<sup>22</sup> He contended that the gendered argument was incorrect and that there were other pushing and pulling factors causing women to join ISIS. Cottee is correct: there are other factors beyond feeling vulnerable and wanting a husband that lead women to migrate. He is wrong, however, to criticize the other arguments for being gendered. The debate is, after all, only focusing on one gender. While Western women that migrate to ISIS are motivated by a variety of factors, there are some women motivated by a desire for companionship.

Through analysis of female migrant’s online presences, the desire to find a husband can be seen as a pulling factor for many women that have left the West to join

ISIS. In August of 2015, three British schoolgirls – Khadiza Sultana, Amira Begase, and Shamima Begum – fled from their homes to ISIS-controlled Syria in a high-profile incident that shocked all who knew them.<sup>23</sup> Investigators combed through the social media accounts of the three girls, interviewed family and friends, and looked for any other pieces of information that might provide some insight into the girls' thinking. Amira's social media posts before her migration are flooded with talk of love and marriage. One post outlines her believed fate to unite with the other half of the pair with which Allah created her.<sup>24</sup> Her resolve was clear and family reports suggest that Amira was the first of the girls to marry after their arrival in Syria.<sup>25</sup>

In another case, a British Muslim woman, who was radicalized as a young girl but has since come to reject extremist ideologies, talked of wanting to get her “piece of eye candy.”<sup>26</sup> She said that she and other young women she had been close with had been infatuated with the attractive jihadi fighters that they had seen in propaganda videos on YouTube. Ayesha – called so in her interview for anonymity purposes – says she was enticed by the idea of marrying a man who shared her devout faith; there was an exciting and exotic quality to these foreign men who exuded masculinity in their willingness to fight and die in the name of Islam. When Ayesha was contacted by a jihadi who began to flatter her, it was not long before she found herself infatuated, and ultimately radicalized. Though her personal experience came before the rise of ISIS, the patterns are similar and suggest ISIS could be employing similar tactics to recruit female migrants.<sup>27</sup> An article in the *New York Times* in 2015 covers a young American woman who converted to Islam after online chatroom exchanges with ISIS members, with particular influence from an ISIS member who flattered and sent her gifts.<sup>28</sup> She was described by herself and family members as having no friends and being very lonely. In ISIS chatrooms, she found people that would listen to her and talk with her every day. While she ultimately did not migrate to ISIS, her story provides an example of how ISIS recruiters exploit women's vulnerabilities and insecurities to target and radicalize potential female members.

ISIS also uses its propaganda to romanticize the life of female migrants and enhance the draw of marrying a jihadi. One such recruiter, known as the Bird of Jannah, runs a blog that features snippets from her daily life.<sup>29</sup> The Bird of Jannah is allegedly a doctor in a women's hospital in the Islamic State. She shares photos of her workplace, husband, and their baby. Her blog posts also include memes, inspiring quotes, or Quran verses superimposed over glamorous and gruesome photos alike. Her writings often read like romantic novels, chronicling her journey to the Islamic State and the love and pride she feels for her husband. In one post, she writes, “I came here alone and broken. You raised my status as a woman.”<sup>30</sup> In another, she describes the night of her marriage and the magical moment when her husband finally lifted her naqib. Though aerial images and other reports on life in the Islamic State often contradict her narrative, the Bird of Jannah details the many benefits and luxuries she and other women of ISIS enjoy, such as comfort foods or free health care.<sup>31</sup>

While marrying does not have to be the only reason – or even the primary reason – that women join the ranks of ISIS, it is clear that women cannot be *opposed* to this arrangement, as they will have little choice in the matter. ISIS recruiters have been explicit that women should not immigrate if they plan to remain single. Umm Layth posts on her Tumblr:

I have stressed this before on twitter but I really need sisters to stop dreaming about coming to Shaam and not getting married. Wallahi [I swear to God] life here is very difficult for the Muhajirat and we depend heavily on the brothers for a lot of support. It is not like the west where you can casually walk out and go to Asda/Walmart and drive back home ... even till now we have to stay safe outside and must always be accompanied by a Mahram [chaperone].<sup>32</sup>

Due to Islamic custom, as well as the dangers of living in a war zone, women are not allowed to be outdoors on their own. Women are placed in a hostel upon arriving in the Islamic State, where they remain with little freedom until they are wed and leave to live with their husband.<sup>33</sup> While they are not “free” upon marriage from a Western standpoint, women assume their role as caretaker of the house. The hostel no longer decides when women are allowed to venture outside; that is now subject to their husband’s discretion. Few take up professional roles as doctors or as members of the al-Khansaa Brigade.<sup>34,35</sup> Many women describe the experience of supporting their husbands and birthing the next generation of jihadis as an intensely rewarding experience.<sup>36</sup>

This idea of supporting the cause by being a good wife is a strong pull for women to join ISIS. Umm Layth, a prominent recruiter of Western women through her social media presence who lives in the Islamic State plays on the excitement of such an opportunity in order to entice potential recruits.<sup>37</sup> She describes her joy, and the joy of the other wives with whom she interacts in a post: “[A]s mundane as some of the day to day tasks may get, still you truly value every minute here for the sake of Allah ... Wallahi [I swear to God] I have come across such beautiful sisters who will spend mornings and nights in happiness because they are cooking the Mujahideen food or they’ll clean the whole building without anyone even figuring it out who it was.”<sup>38</sup> Umm Layth acknowledges that daily life may not be thrilling or glamorous. There is gratification, however, in the contribution to the greater cause that she envisions. She and the women she describes are satisfied because they are doing their own part to aid in the fight for Islam and fulfilling their duty to Allah. The poetry of Ahlam al-Nasr, the wife of a high-ranking Islamic State official, glorifies the everyday duties that women have in ISIS: “Everything had to be clean and wonderful. I kept repeating to myself: ‘This food will be eaten by mujahideen, these plates will be used by mujahideen.’”<sup>39</sup> For Al-Nasr, it is an honor to contribute to the cause. Cooking for the men is a joyous task that she feels proud to be allowed to do. For many of these

women, just being able to go about their daily lives in the Islamic State is a reward. While they cannot take up arms and put their lives out there for a cause like their male counterparts, women are fulfilling their own roles in the fight.

While women may choose to join to find a husband, it is not always just to enjoy being married. Women of ISIS believe that when their husband is martyred, their spot in heaven is also secured by association.<sup>40</sup> A large body of ISIS's propaganda encourages women to feel honored and privileged to be the widow of a martyr.<sup>41</sup> Some messages even suggest that women are hopeful that they might be widowed and enjoy the perceived resulting glory.<sup>42</sup> This again is an example of propaganda romanticizing the experience of being in ISIS. The narrative of the wife losing her husband in a battle for a righteous cause only to reunite with him one day in paradise reads much like the plot of a romance novel. One piece of propaganda shows a gun and a rose side by side with the caption, "In the land of Jihad, I met you / O my dear Mujahid," painting the picture from the beginning that the relationship has the ultimate goal of achieving paradise together in the afterlife.<sup>43</sup>

### **WESTERN INFLUENCES PUSHING WOMEN TO ISIS**

While there are many pulls to ISIS, migrants also feel pushed from the West, often because they believe that Muslims have been villainized and are not welcome in Western societies. Moreover, Muslim women feel alienated from Western society and sociologically discriminated against. Because Western culture continues to be slow to embrace Muslim tradition and culture, women turn to ISIS as a solace from their discomfort while at home. Because of the combined effects of effective recruiting tactics and the failure of Western culture to embrace Muslim women, many are compelled to join the ranks of ISIS. Disengagement and disillusionment with their current society ultimately successfully push Western women towards ISIS. Khadiza and Amira, two of the British schoolgirls who joined ISIS, seem to have been deeply disgruntled by the rise of Islamophobia they perceived in the Western world. Before her departure, Khadiza had stopped wearing trousers and begun covering her head, which her brother described as a rebellion against the Western pity that has been levied on this "symbol of oppression."<sup>44</sup> Khadiza and her friends had become more confrontational at school when it came to talk of the Syrian conflict and other issues in the global Muslim community. Khadiza's brother believed that the anti-Muslim images that seemingly saturate the media took a toll on her. Amira, too, seemed to have felt out of place in the Western world in which she grew up, writing in one post, "I feel like I don't belong in this era."<sup>45</sup> ISIS's emulation of the earliest Muslim traditions offered an escape to the old times that Amira fetishized.<sup>46</sup> Amira also chastised sexualized Western fashion and images in other posts. In messages with family members after their migration, the girls repeated similar sentiments: desires to seek religious purity and a virtuous life and to reject the sinful Western world that had rejected them.<sup>47</sup>

Umm Muthanna, another British woman who fled to join ISIS, documents in a group of tweets an argument she had in one of her university lectures that mirrors

some of the sentiments of the schoolgirls. After the professor lectured on feminism, students were asked to raise their hands if they identified as a feminist. Umm Muthanna kept her hand down and was asked to explain her position:

And I said clearly, Islam has given all my rights to me as a woman and I feel liberated, I feel content and equal in society and all. I explained to them, how both men and women have rights in Islam, given us to in the Qu'raan... I explained how this western society has made you think in a certain way, pressurized you to feel weak and always thirsty to make money. Pressurised you to compete with men, when in reality if you knew your place as a woman, if there was Shari'ah implementation, you would not be complaining like you are now. I said all this and basically everybody tried refuting me. These feminists are deluded!<sup>48</sup>

It seems naïve and rather condescending to suggest that in this case Umm Muthanna was “groomed” by recruiters or targeted from her vulnerability.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, to suggest that she might have joined ISIS only in hopes of finding a husband because she was lonely strips her of the very strong convictions which she appears to hold. Believing that the “jihottie” narrative extends to all cases of female ISIS migrants is failing to recognize that Western ideals and Western views of feminism are not universal and not shared by every woman. Umm Muthanna seems to be devout in her faith and passionately follows the interpretation that women and men were designated separate duties under the Qu'raan. For her, fulfilling her role according to Islamic principles is empowerment, which she does not believe the West can understand.

The ISIS English language magazine *Dabiq* published an article criticizing Western confusion over gender roles titled “The Fitrah of Mankind and the Near-Extinction of the Western Woman.”<sup>50</sup> The fitrah is the human nature instilled in all people by Allah that allows them to distinguish between good and evil. The article argues that Western Judo-Christian values have corrupted the fitrah and that this phenomenon can be most clearly seen in Western gender beliefs:

The role of man and woman was mixed up, as was the responsibility father and mother had towards daughter and son. Woman need not be a mother, a wife, or a maiden, but rather, she should work like man, rule like man ... without being conscious of her Lord watching both her and her heinous partner in crime.<sup>51</sup>

The article goes on to outline the many other ways in which Western women fail in the eyes of Allah. However, it also offers these women a glimmer of hope— recruitment. The article suggests there is a way out for those who choose to accept it: join ISIS. There is still hope for repentance because the fitrah will always exist in everyone

even if only a trace remains buried deep beneath Western filth. Though the path there — more concretely, to ISIS territory — may be arduous, living in a society that practices Sharia Law is the only way to cleanse oneself of the stains of Western society. Again, like the ideas of Umm Muthanna's, the ideas posited here are directly antithetical to Western ideals of gender equality and what liberation for women means. If one believes in this interpretation of Islam, however, then a woman can find liberation through feeling righteous in her faith. As the article concludes, the Western woman must “liberate herself from her enslavement to hedonistic addictions and heathenish doctrines. The solution is laid before the Western woman. It is nothing but Islam, the religion of the fitrah.”<sup>52</sup> A woman does not need the Western view of equality if she can accept her role as outlined by Salafism. Liberation is the knowledge that, with fulfillment of her duties, she will find paradise in the afterlife.

Umm Muthana also puts forth a more combative view towards the West, one which she believes to be mutual. In the months before she left, Umm Muthanna posted the following tweets detailing the reciprocated hatred she perceives between Islam and the West:

“There are only two states: The Islamic State and the Kufr State<sup>53,54</sup>  
Which state are you on?” Dec. 7, 2014, 4:33P.M.

“All the nations have gathered, allied against the believers, it's not the Islamic State they hate, it is Islam, When will realise this [sic]?” Dec. 7, 2014, 4:35P.M.

“...Where do you stand? With the world against Islam...?” Dec. 7, 2014, 4:36P.M.<sup>55</sup>

Umm Muthanna claims that the whole world has united against the Muslim faith. She believes that the West hates her and her people. It is not hard to understand how then, with this mindset, Umm Muthanna decided that she could no longer live in Britain and that she had to flee for the Islamic State, the one place that stands with her.

Umm Muthanna has polarized the issue to two sides: supporters of the caliphate and enemies of Islam. In doing so, Umm Muthanna creates both a push factor from the West and a pull factor to ISIS. The binary lens through which Umm Muthanna and others choose to view the world leaves very little room for choice. Either she can remain in Western society in which she feels a mutual disrespect and hatred, or she can leave for ISIS where she believes she will find people aligned with her beliefs who will welcome her. Other tweets from women in ISIS share Umm Muthanna's binary view of the world. Another migrant, Umm Khattab, tweets that there are “Two camps in the [world] either with the camp of iman [belief] or camp of kufr [unbelief] no in between.”<sup>56</sup> Just like Umm Muthanna, she sees the world at war with only two sides fighting. She even uses the same word, “kufr” to characterize the Western, non-Muslim side. In another instance, Umm Khattab asks, “How can you live amongst people who desire to get rid of islam ... Wallahi [I swear to God] these



Kuffar and Munafiqeen [hypocrites] will do anything to cause the Muslimeen [Muslims] harm.”<sup>57</sup> In her eyes, the Western world has not just rejected Muslim people but is actively working to dissolve the religion through violent means.

There are even more examples of this dichotomized, bellicose thinking. ISIS migrant Umm Irhab tweets, “[t]his is a war against Islam, so you are either with us or against us.”<sup>58</sup> A post on the blog of another ISIS recruiter reads, “[t]heir (Kuffar) agenda is to destroy and prevent the awakening of Muslim Ummah [community].”<sup>59</sup> The Institute for Strategic Dialogue, a leader in the study of why women leave the West for ISIS, identifies this — feelings that the international Muslim community is under attack — as one of the main factors that push women to migrate to ISIS.<sup>60</sup> The tweets of these women demonstrate such thinking and show that these sentiments are prevalent in many of the Western women that choose to join the ranks of the Islamic State.

Another factor pushing women from the West is anger over the West’s perceived apathy towards the plight of Muslims, especially during the Arab Spring. Many ISIS migrants and supporters post images of mutilated children and towns destroyed by the rebellions and civil war in the Arab world on their social media accounts.<sup>61</sup> Some of these ISIS-affiliates suggest the West is complicit in the violence against Muslims for its lack of intervention against the oppressive regimes that plague many Arab countries. The most frequently cited example is the United States’ sluggish response to the atrocities carried out by the Assad regime in Syria.<sup>62</sup>

The West is often criticized in ISIS tweets and blog posts for showing signs of caring about the persons of the state only once members of its own population have been affected. Umm Irhab tweets about this frustration, asking, “What is 1 James Foley compared to the thousands of innocent muslims being slaughtered daily by filthy US[?]”<sup>63</sup> Umm Irhab is also implying that, by not intervening or by supporting some of the oppressive regimes, the United States is responsible for the killings. Others share this belief that the West is at fault. Another ISIS woman tweets, “The killings of innocent muslims [sic] is not just collateral damage tolerated by the leaders of the west, but also directed by them.”<sup>64</sup> This anger with Western indifference reinforces the dichotomist view of the world that pushes people away from the West while simultaneously motivating them to join ISIS.

## CONCLUSION

It is clear that there are many causes that have pushed women from the West. Feelings of social and cultural isolation leave women believing that they do not have a place in Western culture. Moreover, migrants often feel that have been rejected by Western culture, so they not only believe that they do not belong, but also that the West does not want them to belong. Many also observe a rise in Islamophobia nudging women out of the in their home countries and perceive that the international Muslim community is under attack from both the media and from governments carrying out physical violence. Migrants grow frustrated and find it hard to remain among those who are seemingly apathetic to, and often appear complicit in, the suffering of Mus-

lims in the Arab world and international arena. The anger and persecution that many Western Muslim women feel work to alienate them from the West and leave them looking for another place to go.

Similarly, it is clear that there is no singular motivational matrix that has drawn Western women to the Islamic State. The desire for companionship, either in wedding a jihadi or in being part of the “sisterhood,” has enticed both lonely, vulnerable individuals and women with strong convictions and devout Muslim faith. Others are taken in by the romantic pictures of life in ISIS painted by recruiters living there. The promise of an Islamic utopia and feelings of religious duty have also exerted a significant influence on female migrants. This combination of opportunity and obligation have led women to take drastic measures and endure much hardship to successfully journey to ISIS-controlled territory.

Understanding that there are multiple causes and both pushing and pulling factors that lead women to emigrate from the West to join ISIS is important for both comprehension and prevention by Western peoples. The United States, and the Western coalition dedicated to fighting ISIS, has committed not just to dissolving the physical state but also to defeating the idea with the goal of destroying ISIS permanently. To do so, the United States needs to understand the idea and the appeal of ISIS, which it has not yet fully demonstrated it does. In 2014, Major General Michael K. Nagata, commander of American Special Operations forces in the Middle East, said in a confidential conference call, “We do not understand the movement, and until we do, we are not going to defeat it. We have not defeated the idea. We do not even understand the idea.”<sup>65</sup> The bulk of research thus far has focused on the males joining ISIS, presumably because they are the ones participating in jihad. Women, too, have a vital role in the state and its survival, and therefore it must also be understood what the appeal is for women in order to prevent more from joining.

## NOTES

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1. Refers to the first three generations of Muslims. "Pious predecessors" is translated as al-salaf al-sālih in Arabic.
2. Joas Wagemakers, "Salafism," Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion (Aug. 2016), Web. Feb. 27,
3. 2017.
4. Erin Marie Saltman and Melanie Smith, "'Till Martyrdom Do Us Part': Gender and the ISIS
5. Phenomenon," Institute for Strategic Dialogue, "Women and Extremism" Vol. 2 (June 2015), Web. Feb.
6. 28, 2017, pp. 4.
7. Saltman and Smith, "Till Martyrdom Do Us Part," 5.
8. Saltman and Smith, "Till Martyrdom Do Us Part," 21.
9. Ibid., 35.
10. Hoyle, Bradford, and Frenett, "Becoming Mulan?," 30.
11. Ibid, 31.
12. Ibid, 22.
13. Hoyle, Bradford, and Frenett, "Becoming Mulan?," 31.
14. The "/" indicates a break in tweets. The tweets were written in succession and have been combined to read more easily.
15. Saltman and Smith, "Till Martyrdom Do Us Part," 30.
16. Ibid., 34.
17. Hoyle, Bradford, and Frenett, "Becoming Mulan?," 24.
18. Ibid., 27.
19. Saltman and Smith, "Till Martyrdom Do Us Part," 13.
20. Hoyle, Bradford, and Frenett, "Becoming Mulan?," 14.
21. Ibid.
22. "Isis Using 'Jihotties' to Recruit Brides for Fighters," CNN Situation Room (20 Jan. 2016), Web. 3 Mar. 2017.
23. "Attractive jihadist can lure UK girls to extremism," BBC News, Newsnight (3 Mar. 2016), Web. 5 Mar. 2017.
24. Hayley Richardson, "ISIS 'Using Paedophile Grooming Tactics' to Lure Young Jihadi Brides,"
25. Newsweek, 16 Mar. 2016, Web 3 Mar. 2017.
26. Simon Cottee, "What ISIS Women Want," Foreign Policy (17 May 2016), Web. 28 Feb. 2017.
27. Katrin Bennhold, "Jihad and Girl Power: How ISIS Lured 3 London Girls," New York Times (17 Aug.
28. 2015), International ed., Europe sec., Web. 2 Mar. 2017.
29. Ibid.
30. Both Khadiza and Shamima are thought to have married since.
31. "Attractive jihadist can lure UK girls to extremism," BBC News.
32. Ibid.
33. Rukmini Callimachi, "ISIS and the Lonely Young American," New York Times (27 June 2015),
34. International ed., Worlds sec., Web. 6 Mar. 2017.
35. Bird of Jannah, "Muslimah the Bird of Jannah," Facebook, Web 28 Feb. 2017.
36. Atika Shubert, "Blogger romanticizes life with ISIS," CNN Video (27 May 2015), Web. 3 Mar. 2017.
37. Ibid.
38. Carolyn Hoyle, Alexandra Bradford, and Ross Frenett, "Becoming Mulan?: Female Western Mi-
39. grants to ISIS," Institute for Strategic Dialogue, "Women and Extremism" Vol. 1 (Jan. 2015), Web. 27 Feb.
40. 2017, pp. 23.
41. Hoyle, Bradford, and Frenett, "Becoming Mulan?," 24.
42. Kathy Gilman, "The ISIS Crackdown on Women, by Women," The Atlantic (25 July 2014), Web.

- 6 Mar. 2017.
43. Female doctors are responsible for the health care of other females, as Sharia Law prevents male
  44. doctors from effectively treating women. Likewise, the al-Khansaa Brigade is an all-female religious
  45. police force tasked with holding the female members of ISIS accountable and enacting punishments.
  46. Hoyle, Bradford, and Frenett, "Becoming Mulan?," 21.
  47. Ibid. 22.
  48. Ibid.
  49. Robyn Creswell and Bernard Haykel, "Battle Lines: Why Jihadis Write Poetry." *New Yorker*
  50. Magazine (8 June 2015), *The New Yorker*, Web. 26 Feb. 2015.
  51. Hoyle, Bradford, and Frenett, "Becoming Mulan?," 26.
  52. Ibid, 27.
  53. "It was like, get with him before he dies. And then when he dies as a martyr you'll join him in heaven."
  54. From "Attractive jihadists can lure UK girls to extremism," BBC News.
  55. Saltman and Smith, "Till Martyrdom Do Us Part," 17.
  56. Katrin Bennhold, "Jihad and Girl Power."
  57. Ibid.
  58. Graeme Wood, "What ISIS Really Wants," *The Atlantic* (March 2015), Web. 25 Feb. 2017.
  59. Katrin Bennhold, "Jihad and Girl Power."
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