The Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication Presents

The Third Biennial CARGC Symposium

MEDIATING ISLAMIC STATE

Thursday, April 5, 2018
3:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Friday, April 6, 2018
8:30 AM – 5:30 PM

Annenberg School for Communication
3620 Walnut Street, Philadelphia PA 19104
How does the group that calls itself “Islamic State” communicate? How has Islamic State been understood and contested? The Third Biennial CARGC Symposium seeks to explore and understand the players, patterns and practices that have mediated Islamic State: the communicative ways in which the group has been studied, reported on, visualized, narrated, mocked, spoofed, and resisted. We use “mediation” rather than “media” to shift public discourse on Islamic State beyond the focus on technology that has characterized research on media and socio-political change generally, and Islamic State communication in particular. Rather, we seek to understand the historical, ideological, technological, and cultural complexity of Islamic State, meshing translocal struggles with global geopolitics. Mediation connotes a broad approach to media which includes words, images, bodies, platforms, and the expressive capacities and meaning making practices that communicators generate when they deploy these media. Grounded in CARGC’s mission to advance a global media studies that fuses multidisciplinary regional knowledge with theory and methodology in the humanities and social sciences, the symposium spurs a critical conversation that promises a new understanding of the transnational nexus of communication, identity and violence.

#CARGC1718
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<td>PANEL I: JOURNALISM, SATIRE, DRAMA: AN OPENING CONVERSATION</td>
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FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 2018 | Annenberg School for Communication, Room 109

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<td>INTRODUCTION — MEDIATING ISLAMIC STATE: THE WAR MACHINE IN THE DIGITAL AGE</td>
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9:15 – 10:45 AM  PANEL II: RHETORIC, NETWORK, SOVEREIGNTY

Roxanne L. Euben  
Wellesley College  
Spectacles of Sovereignty in Digital Time: ISIS Executions, Visual Rhetoric, and Sovereign Power

Brian Hughes  
American University  
Lone Wolf in the Hypertext: The Internet and Pseudo-Ideological Violence

Michael Krona  
Malmö University  
Collaborative Media Practices and Interconnected Digital Strategies of Islamic State (IS) and Pro-IS Supporter Networks on Telegram

Philippe-Joseph Salazar  
University of Cape Town  
A Caliphate Standing in Time: The Literacy of Terror

Chair: Anne Norton, University of Pennsylvania

10:45 – 11:00 AM  BREAK

11:00 – 12:30 PM  PANEL III: SPECTACLE, AESTHETICS, TEMPORALITY

Yara Damaj  
American University of Beirut  
The Islamic State: Politics by Other Means

Nathaniel Greenberg  
George Mason University  
Khalifah Ad Absurdum: On the Communicative Aesthetics of the Islamic State Group

Lina Khatib  
Chatham House  
“Traces” of the Islamic State

Bashir Saade  
University of Stirling  
ISIS and Game of Thrones: The Global between Tradition, Identity, and the Politics of Spectacle

Chair: Samira Rajabi, CARGC, Annenberg School for Communication

12:30 – 1:30 PM  LUNCH
1:30 – 2:45 AM  PANEL IV: IMAGE, SOUND, AFFECT

Kareem El Damanhoury  
Georgia State University  
The Social Media Battle for Mosul: Visual Framing Analysis of Daesh's Imagery in Ninawa Province

Rayya El Zein  
CARGC, Annenberg School for Communication  
Hearing Familiar Friends and Foes: Sonic Racialization and the Mediation of IS

Christoph Günther  
University of Mainz  
Iconic Socioclasm: Idol-Breaking and the Dawn of a New Social Order

Chair: Jamal Elias, University of Pennsylvania

2:45 – 3:00 PM  BREAK

3:00 – 4:15 AM  PANEL V: BODY, GENDER, POWER

Heather Jaber  
CARGC, Annenberg School for Communication  
Mediation, Moderation, and Melodrama: The Portrayal of ISIS in Al Gharabeeb Al Soud

Weeda Mehran  
Georgia State University  
“You Will be More Beautiful, Have More Jewelries, and a Wardrobe Full of Fine Dresses”: The Promise of Heavenly Rewards for Female Militancy

Mohammed Salih  
CARGC, Annenberg School for Communication  
The Islamic State and Biopolitics: Power, Triviality and the Camp

Chair: Yasemin Y. Celikkol, CARGC, Annenberg School for Communication

4:15 – 4:45 PM  DISCUSSION & CONCLUDING REMARKS

4:45 – 5:30 PM  RECEPTION
Panel I: Journalism, Satire, Drama: An Opening Conversation

A salon-style conversation between leading media figures discussing various mediations of Islamic State.

Panel II: Rhetoric, Network, Sovereignty

Roxanne L. Euben

Spectacles of Sovereignty in Digital Time: ISIS Executions, Visual Rhetoric, and Sovereign Power

The ISIS videos staging the executions of James Foley and Steven Sotloff are usually understood as devices to deter, recruit, and “sow terror.” Left unanswered are questions about how these videos work, to whom they are addressed, and what about them can so continuously bring new audiences into existence. The evident durability of ISIS despite the imminent defeat of its state, coupled with the political impact of these particular videos, make these questions unusually urgent. Complete answers require analysis of the most understudied aspect of the videos: the visual mode of the violence. Approaching these videos as visual texts in need of close reading shows that they are, among other things, enactments of “retaliatory humiliation” (defined by Islamists) that perform and produce an inversion of power in two registers. It symbolically converts the public abjection of Foley and Sotloff by the Islamist executioner into an enactment of ISIS’ invincibility and a demonstration of American impotence. It also aims to transpose the roles between the US, symbolically refigured as mass terrorist, failed sovereign, and rogue state, and ISIS, now repositioned as legitimate, invincible sovereign. These spectacles do not simply speak to ready-made communities; such rhetorical practices seek to actually constitute their audiences through the very visual and visceral power of their address. The affective power of this address is then extended and intensified by the temporality that conditions it: digital time. Digital time has rendered increasingly rare ordinary moments of pause between rapid and repetitive cycles of reception and reaction—moments necessary for even a small measure of distance. The result is a sensibility, long in gestation but especially of this time, habituated to thinking less and feeling more, to quick response over deliberative action.

ABSTRACTS
Brian Hughes

Lone Wolf in the Hypertext: The Internet and Pseudo-Ideological Violence

Contemporary, English-speaking research into “Islamic” terrorism is plagued by a profusion of contradictory heuristics, just-so stories, and naturalized prejudices disguised as common wisdom. This work has tended to present the phenomenon as a result of either perverting political-religious epistemologies into distorted, caricatured fundamentalisms, or, alternatively, as a return to form, whereby a pure, root ideology/metaphysic is rediscovered. Yet the figure of the lone wolf profoundly undermines these models, particularly as he manifests in our age of hypertextual media.

Perhaps most fundamentally, all such discourse errs in its assumption—intrinsic in the very semantic structure of such terms as “Islamic extremism” and “jihadism”—that violent extremism, and the initiatory process of radicalization, originate in the historical and contemporary practices of Islam. Case studies of lone wolf terrorists—particularly those who follow a pattern of online self-radicalization—reveal that violent extremism grows not from the specific cultural or historical practices of Islam, but from a general affect of sadism, thrill-seeking, and personality disorder. The lone wolf’s pathologies are therefore only Islamically-inflected, often through an accretion of mediated encounters linking representations of violence, Islam, and the lone wolf himself. This points us to the conclusion that in the case of these violent extremists, pathology usually—perhaps always—precedes theology/ideology.

Michael Krona

Collaborative Media Practices and Interconnected Digital Strategies of Islamic State (IS) and Pro-IS Supporter Networks on Telegram

There are emerging trends and characteristics of media practices and digital strategies within terrorist organizations revealing the importance of digital supporter networks aligned with a more streamlined and centralized communication and propaganda strategy from the organization itself. No previous, nor contemporary, organization has so far managed to develop and execute such a widespread and sophisticated model for producing and distributing propaganda as the Islamic State (IS), dependent on digital participation from supporters around the globe. From initial frequent activity on open social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook, IS recently, much due to increased censorship efforts, moved its official messaging and distribution center to the Russian-based encrypted platform Telegram. This also empowered supporters to make a similar move, thus starting their own channels and chats on the much less censored platform. In these pro IS channels on Telegram, supporters are managing virtual communities in which an ideological bolstering, remediation and recontextualization of official propa-
ganda are apparent on a daily basis. Through a netnographic approach and covert observation of IS channels on Telegram, both official and non-official, during six months of 2017, this article aims to present findings on what characterizes the symbiotic relation between official IS channels and messaging, and supporters (pro-IS) channels and content, as well as critically discuss how the conjunctures and media practices surrounding official and non-official IS channels on Telegram can be understood as manifestations of contemporary digital warfare. In addition, the findings contribute to a theoretical understanding of IS as a transmedial and multimodal enterprise in which the relation between IS and its supporters online constitutes a significant shift in modern warfare.

Philippe-Joseph Salazar
A Caliphate Standing in Time: The Literacy of Terror

Tracing foundations of violent polities requires an attention to their rhetoric, that is, not only to the production of propaganda as media, but to its resilience in Time: How such polities can project themselves beyond their material disappearance, that is, mediate themselves. The Caliphate of the Islamic State’s endurance, as it disappears, points to Heidegger’s lesson, that Being has its stasis in Time and not in breaking news. ISIS stands, it “is” in Time. The irruption of the Caliphate on the world scene goes further than jihad, further than a West-Islam confrontation; it touches radically on the way in which political life exists in relation to the resilience of words and images in Time. While jihadist terror is mediated as “incomprehensible” by media and politicians, it is comprehensible if we pay attention to what lies under the media phenomenon, or in Heideggerian terms, analyse what “stands under” what we believe we know about the phenomenon called “ISIS.”

Panel III: Spectacle, Aesthetics, Temporality

Yara Damaj
The Islamic State: Politics by Other Means

Much of the research published about the Islamic State has examined the militant group from either geopolitical, security, Orientalist, or counter-Orientalist frameworks. These approaches have overlooked the Islamic State’s discursive production of meaning. To understand the ideology that animates the militant group, this research provides a formal analysis of the Islamic State, one that branches out from the militant group’s own publications. Therefore, and contra to analyses of the Islamic State as an antediluvian and irrational entity, this research situates the militant group in our present historic moment, one that is characterized by a crisis of neoliberal capitalism, and a concomitant rise of right-wing populism (fascism). In fact, the focus on the Islamic State’s brutal violence, as a subjective outbreak that is aberrant and singular, overlooks the objective, systemic, and structural violence of capitalist globalization within which the Islamic State functions. Indeed, the
Nathaniel Greenberg

Khalifah Ad Absurdum: On the Communicative Aesthetics of the Islamic State Group

At the peak of its activity, the Islamic State appeared to disseminate “tens of thousands” of tweets daily. According to a 2015 study by the Brookings Institute, however, most of these messages were sent through automata, bots without followers. It appears now more likely the group never had more than 2,000 dedicated tweeters. The vast majority of its communications were facilitated by algorithms and “soft sympathizers”—non-combatants who like or share propaganda online. This peculiar dimension of IS communications manifest in myriad ways. From the strange ubiquity of the group’s black and white insignia, to confessionals of converts dressed in fatigues and pronouncing half-formed ideas on shari’ah, or, as I examine in this paper, the cinematic remix of medieval battle scenes, there existed in IS communications a material artificiality—an aesthetic—easily reproduced anywhere, anytime, with or without human involvement. Born amidst an ICT boom, IS communications, I argue, confirmed Fred Forest’s early thesis on the Internet that the new medium would precipitate “artists of communication” valued not for their capacity to render existent forms nuanced or elegant, but for their facility in generating notice. Information precedes essence in the strange world of IS aesthetics, this despite the group’s otherwise vivid, often Ba’athist, overtures to heritage symbols and themes. Discerning the impact of ICT on IS messaging thus implicates a fundamental paradox at the heart of the movement: its ambitions appear profound yet its methodology falls strictly within the realm of the profane.

Lina Khatib

“Traces” of the Islamic State

This paper seeks to investigate the traces left by the Islamic State following its military defeat in Iraq. The year 2017 saw ISIS lose much of its territory, with the Iraqi government declaring victory over it. However, the end of the organization’s territorial control does not mean the end of ISIS. Since its military defeat, ISIS has been transforming into an underground network in Iraq. Through fieldwork conducted in March 2018 in areas previously held by ISIS in Iraq, the author aims to discover how ISIS now exists as a “trace,” both physically and conceptually. Physically, “trace” refers to what the organization has left behind in areas it used to rule. The fieldwork investigates how people in those areas reflect on their interactions with Islamic State concocts fantasies of belongingness premised on eschatological crisis by using religion as the form in which ideology is packaged. This research unpacks the spectacularization of violence that the militant group performs in the context of the capitalist “society of spectacle” in order to showcase some of the more prevalent discourses in the Islamic State’s ideology.
ISIS, how they are dealing with the remnants of ISIS, and what communication strategy ISIS has used in order to keep its supporters loyal to it and to prepare for a comeback in the future. In analyzing the transformation of ISIS in this context, the paper alludes to Derrida's concept of “trace” as a characteristic of ISIS in Iraq today, whose present bears the trace of an absent that defines this present.

Bashir Saade

ISIS and Game of Thrones: The Global between Tradition, Identity, and the Politics of Spectacle

The gruesome videos circulated on most media platforms by the organization that calls itself the Islamic State (IS) have prompted a heated debate about the “Islamicity” of the organization. The debate centered around questions of authority as scholars and commentators were split between trying to prove that IS practices have nothing to do with Islam, sometimes by showing the “ignorance” of most IS members or related actors over “religious” matters, whereas others insisted on how serious IS actors were on getting their “interpretations” right. If any act of “interpretation” or of understanding of “religion” has been transformed by the various technological and ideological developments of the last two centuries, I will argue here that Salafi understanding (of which IS articulations are but one aspect) of a mythical past – and imagining of history outside a ‘lived’ tradition – marries itself conveniently with the way the latest audiovisual technology manifests itself to an audience, especially in consecrating a culture of speed and “eventual” rupture. The paper will draw parallels between these practices and those of recent TV shows such as Game of Thrones especially in reimagining a “medieval epoch” that serves as a schema for addressing contemporary concerns. Moreover, the paper will reflect on the notion of tradition (of doing) by shifting the focus from the producer of audiovisual material to one of dialectical relationship between production and audience.

Panel IV: Image, Sound, Affect

Kareem El Damanhoury

The Social Media Battle for Mosul: Visual Framing Analysis of Daesh’s Imagery in Ninawa Province

As Iraqi security forces were getting closer to liberate Mosul from Daesh militants, another crucial battle took place on social media. With still imagery being Daesh’s most recurring propaganda tool (Milton, 2016; Zelin, 2015), defeating the group in the social media battlefield requires a nuanced understanding of how it visually frames its messaging at the provincial level. The Mosul operation poses a unique opportunity to gauge how Daesh operated as a “virtual caliphate” amid territorial losses. Using visual framing and content analysis, this study examines
This paper examines how music has helped build ideas of who or what the mis-named Islamic State touches and how it spreads. It considers two groupings of musical media: the affiliation of rap with IS recruits in 2014-2016 and the use of musical satires of IS by Arab artists and DJs over the same period. I mobilize a diverse selection of material drawn from Israeli, US, UK, Lebanese, and Egyptian mediascapes to argue that the construction of the idea of what makes up or constitutes IS builds on specific racialized and ethnicized imaginations. In the construction of existential terrorist threats in the imagery of Israeli election campaigns, an infatuation with "jihadi rap" in English language media outlets, and the securitization of music scenes in the southern suburbs of Beirut, I argue first that the construction of a threatening idea of the motivations of individual IS recruits built on sonic harbingers of urban danger elsewhere. These examples show how ideas of a racist imagination of urban "thug" bled easily into an idea of an Islamic "terrorist." Moving from here, in a selection of musical satires of the IS and its leaders, I consider how Lebanese musicians and Egyptian DJs achieved a critical remixing of the sonic ethnic and religious cues used by IS in their own propaganda and rhetoric. Juxtaposing these two sets of material works to illuminate the ways in which racial and ethnic ideas of what constitutes individual members were a central part of the mediation of IS.

1155 images disseminated by Ninawa media office on Daesh’s official Telegram channel between October 17, 2016 and January 31, 2017. Using a grounded theory approach, the study breaks down Ninawa imagery into eight visual frames: combat, preparation, eulogy, law enforcement, social services, economy, natural landscape/cityscape, and media distribution. Whereas military pressure hindered the production and dissemination of some frames, such as combat and war spoils, the dissemination of others, such as eulogy and law enforcement, ramped up amid intensified pressure. Using content analysis, the study then examines the visual semiotics, including eye contact, camera angle, shot sizes, and perceived distance, to identify some of Daesh’s visual techniques to create social and symbolic meanings.

Rayya El Zein

Hearing Familiar Friends and Foes: Sonic Racialization and the Mediation of IS

Christoph Günther

Iconic Socioclasm: Idol-Breaking and the Dawn of a New Social Order

The Islamic State not only articulates its claim for legitimate authority in texts and audio messages. The movement sought to classify ‘genuine’ Islam and its boundaries through a repertoire of religious and social practices, which make the distinction between ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ tangible for local populations and various
audiences abroad. Among the practices employed by the Islamic State to exercise their classificatory power in Iraq, Syria, and beyond was the destruction of cultural properties and the targeted killing of clerics and spiritual leaders all of which have an eminent role for the collective identity of religious communities. I argue that the Islamic State's all-encompassing intention and exercise of spatial, material, ideational, and intellectual purification of the socio-religious landscape is not only fundamental to the establishment of ‘genuine’ Islam, but also makes the Islamic State's iconoclasm rather a form of socioclasm in the first place. Visualizations of these acts furthermore render the Islamic State an effective force as they help to produce mental and physical images both in the minds of the movement's followers and adversaries, which become testimonies to the rise of the Islamic State, its ideology, and actions.

Panel V: Body, Gender, Power

Heather Jaber

Mediation, Moderation, and Melodrama: The Portrayal of ISIS in Al Gharabeeb Al Soud

During the Ramadan season of 2017—television's most popular viewing time in the Arab world—pan-Arab satellite channel MBC introduced a new drama program, Al Gharabeeb Al Soud (Black Crows), centered around the lives of ISIS recruits. While this was not the first regional television series that set out to confront the notion of extremism, it presented new levels of technical production, a diverse transnational cast, and narratives focusing on the lives of women living within ISIS's holding in Raqqa, Syria. Quickly, the series garnered controversy and public debate around its portrayal of women, Islam, and the geopolitical context around the rise of ISIS. What is more, the series has come to the fore at a time when political leaders and institutions have called for the investment in popular programming, and in particular, the musalsal (Arabic-language television drama), in the effort to confront extremist ideologies. While such programming often becomes a highly contentious medium for debate, this series presents a complex blend of affective intensity, production-level strategy, and geopolitical resonance in the transnational landscape. Public discourse around its portrayal of women, Islam, and ISIS also brings to the fore important questions around the relationship between melodrama and modernity. Through a consideration of the program's production, its textual elements, and the debate that ensued around its authenticity, this talk aims to understand the way that the turn to melodrama can help indicate the emerging circuits of affect (Kraidy 2017) that complicate or maintain current structures of feeling and power.
Weeda Mehran

“You Will be More Beautiful, Have More Jewelries, and a Wardrobe Full of Fine Dresses”: The Promise of Heavenly Rewards for Female Militancy

In its AlNaba Issue of November 2017, ISIS called upon women to fulfill their duty as Muslim women “on all fronts in supporting the mujahedeen in this battle” and pick up arms to “defend their religion by sacrificing themselves.” While much is discussed about why women join ultraconservative groups such as ISIS, Boko Haram and the Taliban, as well as how these women are depicted by the mainstream media, there is no systematic study of how jihadi women are depicted by the jihadi groups’ media. This research addresses the question of how women are framed in jihadist rhetoric and what roles they play within these frames. Through a comparative analysis of ISIS and Tehrik-e Taliban of Pakistan (TTP’s) magazines, this paper argues that the call for female jihadi militants is not simply a strategic move with a significant operational importance, but it also signifies a gradual evolution of a Muslim woman’s identity within jihadi framings from that of “victims,” or “mothers,” “wives” and “sisters” of jihadists to that of “mujahida” (female mujahid), “muhajira” (female traveller) and “shahida” (female martyr). The findings also indicate that this evolution has been a contentious process, as the groups appear to be in constant struggle to reconcile their strict traditional constructs of masculinity and femininity with that of a “female jihadi militant”.

Mohammed Salih

The Islamic State and Biopolitics: Power, Triviality and the Camp

The dramatic rise and expansion of the Islamic State (IS) in Iraq, Syria, parts of Africa and South Asia engendered much discussion about the group’s atrocities and geopolitical impact, as well as debates about how to respond to it—not just militarily, but in the domains of ideology and propaganda as well. Yet there has been little effort to understand IS as a power. What do IS’s practices, beliefs, and propaganda tell us about it as a form of power? And equally important, how has IS conceived of itself as a power? This article is an attempt to shed light on IS’s exercise of power, looking specifically at its view and treatment of women. IS’s propaganda and actions tell us much about its particularly radical strand of Salafi jihadi ideology and practices as a power. Sifting through the pages of Dabiq, a multilingual magazine that IS produced between July 2014 to July 2016, the picture that emerges of IS’s treatment and view of women, their behavior, role and status in private and public spheres bears the hallmarks of a biopolitical power. A biopolitical power is a broad designation here combining elements of both Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben’s definitions and interpretations of the concept involving practices of biopower, disciplinary power and sovereign power. This is a power that seeks a maximum regulation of the lives of Muslim women, down to the minute details, and exercises extreme brutality by subjecting captured non-Muslim women to an exceptional state of violence and abuse where they are reduced to their bare biological minimum.
Ahmed Albasheer is an Iraqi comedian, television host, writer and director. He hosts a popular satirical television program called The Albasheer Show, which broadcasts on Deutsche Welle and Iraqi television stations. Along with his crew, he finds satire an effective tool to fight corruption, violence, terrorism, and sectarian war. They believe that satire enables them to show the reality of the terrorists behind the masks they put on their faces. Satire, to him, is an instrument to keep young people away from violence and help them resist the lure of brainwashing and recruitment into terrorist groups. The Albasheer Show has a pan-Arab audience of 20 million.

Michael X. Delli Carpini, Dean of the Annenberg School for Communication, received his BA and MA from the University of Pennsylvania (1975) and his PhD from the University of Minnesota (1980). Prior to joining the University of Pennsylvania faculty in July of 2003, Professor Delli Carpini was Director of the Public Policy program of the Pew Charitable Trusts (1999-2003), and member of the Political Science Department at Barnard College and graduate faculty of Columbia University (1987-2002), serving as chair of the Barnard department from 1995 to 1999. Delli Carpini began his academic career as an Assistant Professor in the Political Science Department at Rutgers University (1980-1987). His research explores the role of the citizen in American politics, with particular emphasis on the impact of the mass media on public opinion, political knowledge and political participation. He is author of Stability and Change in American Politics: The Coming of Age of the Generation of the 1960s (New York University Press, 1986), What Americans Know about Politics and Why It Matters (Yale University Press, 1996 and winner of the 2008 American Association of Public Opinion Researchers Book Award), A New Engagement? Political Participation, Civic Life and the Changing American Citizen (Oxford University Press, 2006), Talking Together: Public Deliberation and Political Participation in America (University of Chicago Press, 2009), and with Bruce Williams, After Broadcast News: Media Regimes, Democracy, and the New Information Environment (Cambridge, 2011), as well as numerous articles, essays and edited volumes on political communications, public opinion and political socialization.

Yasemin Y. Celikkol is a doctoral student at the Annenberg School for Communication and a CARGC Doctoral Fellow. She studies global communication with an emphasis on transnational media, geopolitics, and culture, spanning the Balkans, Turkey, Russia, and Central Asia. Her current research grapples with the popularity of Turkish dramas in the Balkans and Russia in light of historical tensions and geopolitical implications. Celikkol pursued her education on three continents: Bulgaria,
the US, and Japan. She holds a BA in Politics from New York University, an MA in Language Education/Sociolinguistics from International Christian University in Tokyo, and an MS in Intercultural Communication from University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. Immediately prior to Annenberg, she was a doctoral student at Drexel University’s Communication, Culture, and Media program for one year. She is the recipient of a number of academic distinctions, including the US Department of Education Foreign Languages and Area Studies Fellowship (FLAS) for the study of Arabic and the Middle East. Celikkol’s name is associated with baby sign language and positive discipline in Turkey, where she authored books and articles that were well received by readers and the media. Her baby sign language book was the first book on sign language to be available in bookstores, a development appreciated by the Deaf community and the Hearing Impaired Federation of Turkey with whom she collaborated to further disseminate sign language in Turkey. She is a member of the Jihadi Networks Of Culture & Communications (JINCS) Research Group at CARGC.

Yara Damaj has recently graduated with a Master’s in Public Policy and International Affairs from the American University of Beirut (AUB). Her thesis aimed at theorizing the Islamic State by conducting a discursive analysis of some of the militant group’s primary sources. Yara has completed her undergraduate studies in both psychology and political studies at AUB, where she also minored in human rights and transitional justice. She has extensive experience working in academic research in the fields of politics, political psychology, and social anthropology. Her research interests are mostly rooted in understanding world events through the lenses of critical theory and political philosophy (and vice versa). In her free time, Yara serves as the National Association Representative for Lebanon at CISV International, a volunteer-based organization that educates and inspires action for a more just and peaceful world. She is a member of the Jihadi Networks Of Culture & Communications (JINCS) Research Group at CARGC.

Kareem El Damanhoury is currently a Presidential Research Fellow and a doctoral candidate at Georgia State University’s Department of Communication. His research interests include visual communication, Middle East media, and militant groups’ propaganda on social media. He has published a number of articles in the Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence, Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, Journal of Media, War, and Conflict, European Journal of Argumentation in Context, Journal of Arab and Muslim Media Research, Journal of Middle East Media, and Global-E/CARGC Press. El Damanhoury earned his MA in Communication from the Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University and his BA from Cairo University. He has previously been a TV producer of talk shows, breaking news coverage, and documentary films in Egypt and the United States. Currently, El Damanhoury is a freelance journalist with CNN International in Atlanta. He is a member of the Jihadi Networks Of Culture & Communications (JINCS) Research Group at CARGC.
Jamal Elias is Walter H. Annenberg Professor in the Humanities and Professor of Religious Studies and South Asia Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He teaches courses on Islamic thought, culture and history, with a focus on Sufism, Islamic and modernity, as well as visual and material culture in the Middle East and South Asia. A recipient of many grants and awards from the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Social Science Research Council (among others), he has lectured and published broadly on history, religion, literature and material and visual culture in the medieval and modern Islamic world. His most recent books are On Wings of Diesel: Trucks, Identity and Culture in Pakistan (Oxford 2011), Aisha’s Cushion: Religious Art, Perception and Practice in Islam (Cambridge, MA, 2012), and Alef is for Allah: Childhood, Emotion and Visual Culture in Islamic Societies (Berkeley, 2018). At present he is writing a book on the history of the Mevlevi order (Rumi’s followers) from shortly after Rumi’s death until the advent of modernity

Shereen El Meligi, Senior Manager – Content, at O3, has more than 20 years of experience in content development, acquisitions, production, channel management and communications. Previously the Director of Programming at Channels, Image Nation Abu Dhabi, she was part of the Launch team of Quest Arabiya, a joint venture between Image Nation Abu Dhabi and Discovery Networks. Between 2010 and 2014, she was Head of Programming at Abu Dhabi Drama, one of Abu Dhabi Media’s TV channels, successfully launching the channel, developing its vision, and implementing its overall business strategy. As a member of the Content Committee, Shereen was part of the team responsible for all selection and greenlighting content for ADM’s Group of channels including Turkish, Latin, Gulf, Syrian, and Egyptian series, as well as programs and formats. Prior to that, she was Director of Programming & Production at Melody Entertainment, where her responsibilities included content acquisitions, programming and production for a group of TV channels: Melody Aflam, Melody Hits, Melody Arabia and Melody Tunes. Previously, she had held the position of Director of Special Projects at Alkarma Edutainment, where she was part of the team that brought Sesame Street to Egypt as Alam Sismim. The show, funded by the U.S. Government’s Agency for International Development was the most successful coproduction with Sesame Workshop, which has adapted the show in over 20 countries.

Rayya El Zein is a CARGC Postdoctoral Fellow at the Annenberg School for Communication. She holds a PhD in Theatre from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Her research concerns processes of live cultural production, popular culture and media, and audiences in urban Arab contexts and diasporas. In her work, she examines the political economy of consumption and leisure as an important part of the politics of reception and spectatorship. To date, this research has centered on these dynamics in live music and the media representations of hybrid cultural phenomena amid patterns of neoliberal growth in the Levant. Her first book is concerned with emergent politics in rap and hip hop concerts
in Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan. Rayya’s ongoing research examines notions of affect, materiality, the popular, and the sonic in Arabic. Her writing has appeared in *LateraL*, the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, *Theatre Journal*, *Theatre Survey*, *Ethnomusicology Forum* and on the e-zine *Jadaliyya*. She is a member of the Jihadi Networks Of Culture & Communications (JINCS) Research Group at CARGC.

**Roxanne L. Euben** is the Ralph Emerson and Alice Freeman Palmer Professor of Political Science at Wellesley College. Professor Euben’s research has helped define a relatively new and growing area of inquiry called comparative political theory, and her particular area of research is Islamic and European political thought. Euben’s publications include *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism*, *Journeys to the Other Shore: Muslim and Western Travelers in Search of Knowledge*, and *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from Al-Banna to Bin Laden*, written and edited with Muhammad Qasim Zaman. Euben’s research has been supported by fellowships from the John S. Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. She was also awarded the Pinanski Teaching Prize at Wellesley College. Her current book project is on rhetorics of humiliation.

**Nathaniel Greenberg** is Assistant Professor of Arabic at George Mason University and Book Review Editor for the *Journal of Arabic Literature*. His books include *The Aesthetic of Revolution in the Film and Literature of Naguib Mahfouz (1952-1967)*, and *Islamists of the Maghreb* with Jeffry R. Halverson. Dr. Greenberg’s research focuses on the intersection of aesthetics, technology, and political transformation in the modern Middle East. He has published on topics ranging from the role of satire in the war against ISIS, to the intellectual foundations of the avant-garde in post-WWII Iraq and Egypt. From 2012-2013, Dr. Greenberg worked as a post-doctoral fellow with the Center for Strategic Communication on an ONR-funded project examining extremist narratives in North Africa. He is presently completing a third book drawn from that research. At George Mason, Dr. Greenberg teaches translation, literature, and film. He serves currently as program director for the University’s BA in Arabic.

**Christoph Günther**’s research interests include religio-political movements in the modern Middle East, visual cultures and iconography, and the sociology of religion. He currently leads the junior research group *Jihadism on the Internet* at the University of Mainz, Department of Anthropology and African Studies. He studied Middle Eastern studies, history, and Arabic in Bamberg and Cairo from 2002 to 2008. He earned his doctorate in 2013 from Leipzig University and was a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle (Saale). There, he prepared his second monograph in which he addresses the Islamic State’s identity politics and scrutinizes the movement’s symbolic repertoire. He has extensively published on the evolution, ideology, and political iconography of the Islamic State and its predecessors.
Brian Hughes is a first-year doctoral student in the School of Communication at American University in Washington, D.C. His work explores the impact of communication technology on political and religious extremism, terrorism and fringe culture. In addition to ISIS, his work has addressed 20th-century precursors of today's Alt-Right, the “Hardline” music subculture, and the media of the occult. This work seeks to identify the affective and material commonalities between extremists of differing ideologies, cultures, times, and places. He is currently writing a genealogy and network analysis of American reactionary alternative media. His writing and ideas have been featured at CNN.com and on the NPROne Team Human podcast. He blogs about media and extremism at mrbrianhughes.wordpress.com. He is a member of the Jihadi Networks Of Culture & Communications (JINCS) Research Group at CARGC.

Heather Jaber is a doctoral student at the Annenberg School for Communication and a CARGC Doctoral Fellow. She holds a BA in Business and an MA in Media Studies from the American University of Beirut, where she studied the emerging visibility of characters coded as homosexual in Lebanese musalsalat, or Arabic-language television dramas. Upon graduating, she won the Abdul Hadi Debs Endowment Award for academic excellence and demonstration of research capabilities. Before joining Annenberg, she worked as a journalist and researcher in the US, Lebanon, and Austria. More recently, she served as Communications Coordinator for the KIP Project in Lebanon, where she helped launch a multidisciplinary conference on discrimination and sexual harassment and a national public awareness campaign to highlight the need for legislative reform around sexual harassment in Lebanon. As a doctoral student, she is interested in the intersections between gender, sexuality, popular culture, and geopolitics in the Arab world and beyond, and particularly in interrogating the symbolic function of deviance in the construction of the nation. She is increasingly interested in turning to popular culture as a method for complicating dominant structures of thinking while also mining it for affective potential. She is a member of the Jihadi Networks Of Culture & Communications (JINCS) Research Group at CARGC.

Lina Khatib is head of the Middle East and North Africa Programme at Chatham House. She was formerly director of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut and the co-founding head of the Program on Arab Reform and Democracy at Stanford University’s Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law. Her research focuses on the international relations of the Middle East, Islamist groups and security, political transitions, and foreign policy, with special attention to the Syrian conflict. She is a research associate at SOAS, was a senior research associate at the Arab Reform Initiative and lectured at Royal Holloway, University of London. She has published seven books and also written widely on public diplomacy, political communication, and political participation in the Middle East. She is a frequent commentator on politics and security in the Middle East and North Africa at events around the world and in the media.
Marwan M. Kraidy is the Anthony Shadid Chair in Global Media, Politics and Culture; Director of the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication, Annenberg School, University of Pennsylvania; and an Andrew Carnegie Fellow working on the war machine in the age of global communication, focusing on “Islamic State” in comparative perspective. Kraidy has published 130 essays and 13 books, including Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization (Temple UP 2005), and Reality Television and Arab Politics: Contention in Public Life (Cambridge UP 2010), which was supported by a Fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and a grant from the United States Institute of Peace, and winner of three major prizes: the Diamond Anniversary Best Book Award and the Roderick P. Hart Outstanding Book Award in Political Communication, both from the National Communication Association; and Best Book Award in Global Communication and Social Change, International Communication Association. Kraidy crafted his account of the Arab Spring, The Naked Blogger of Cairo: Creative Insurgency in the Arab World (Harvard UP 2016) in Wassenaar, as a Fellow of the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences and Humanities and of the American Council of Learned Societies, and revised it in Philadelphia as a Fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The book won the International Communication Association’s Outstanding Book Award, the ICA’s Division of Global Communication and Social Change Best Book Award, and the Roderick P. Hart Outstanding Book Award in Political Communication from NCA, and was a 2016 Times Higher Education Book of the Year. He tweets @MKraidy. He is the director of the Jihadi Networks Of Culture & Communications (JINCS) Research Group at CARGC.

Marina Krikorian is Project Coordinator at the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. Before relocating to Philadelphia in 2013, she was Public Affairs Coordinator at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University. Marina has a BA in Political Science from UC Berkeley and an MA in Middle Eastern Studies from the American University of Beirut, where her research focused on the relationship between the Armenian diaspora in Lebanon and the Armenian homeland. She tweets at @mruthkrik.

Michael Krona is Assistant Professor in Media and Communication Studies and Visual Communication at School of Arts, Communication and Culture (K3) at the Faculty of Culture and Society at Malmö University, Sweden. Recent academic publications include work on social media activism in the Middle East, mainly concerned with the Arab Spring uprisings of 2011. Since 2015, he has been working exclusively with monitoring Islamic State (IS) media strategies and propaganda, with particular focus on the symbiotic relation between official IS media practices and pro-IS digital supporter networks. Co-editor and author of forthcoming anthology, The Media World of ISIS, (Indiana University Press 2018), Krona also serves
Weeda Mehran is a Postdoctoral Fellow at Global Studies Institute, Georgia State University. She works with the Mobilising Media Team. Her research takes a multidisciplinary approach to studying propaganda campaign across a number of groups such as the Islamic State, Taliban, Boko Haram and TTP. She is particularly interested in investigating dynamics of online communities and the relationship between online and offline structures, social and political relations, and logics that produce and reinforce extremist ideologies among youth. Before joining the Global Studies Institute, Weeda worked at Hamburg University and McGill University. In 2015, Weeda completed her PhD degree titled *The Political Economy of Warlord Democracy in Afghanistan* at the Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Cambridge. Weeda is actively involved in national and global policy processes. She has worked with NGOs and UN organizations in Afghanistan, including UN Women, UNDP, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, Integrity Watch Afghanistan and Women and Children Research Foundation.

Anne Norton is the author of *On the Muslim Question, 95 Theses on Politics, Culture and Method, Leo Strauss and the Politics of American Empire, Bloodrites of the Poststructuralists, Republic of Signs, Reflections on Political Identity, and Alternative Americas: A Reading of Antebellum Political Culture*. She is part of the Bridge Initiative against Islamophobia and founding co-editor of *Theory & Event*. She was educated at the University of Chicago and is Stacey and Henry Jackson President’s Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania. She has also taught at the University of Chicago, the University of Notre Dame, Princeton University and the University of Texas, and has held fellowships at the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women and the University Center for Human Values at Princeton. She has working projects on radical democracy, the problem of property, and racial inequality.

Bashir Saade is a Lecturer in Religion & Politics at the University of Stirling. His research interest centers on changing notions of religion and politics in Arabic-Islamic traditions and beyond. He adopts a multidisciplinary and genealogical reading of oral and written production of premodern to modern scholarship and is especially interested in the impact of media technological developments on contemporary Islamic movements. His book *Hizbullah and the Politics of Remembrance* (Cambridge University Press, 2016) is an intellectual history of the Lebanese political party and a reflection on the notion of ideology in social studies.
**Samira Rajabi** is a CARGC Postdoctoral Fellow at the Annenberg School of Communication. She completed her PhD in Media Research and Practice at the University of Colorado at Boulder, and a degree in Business Management and Entrepreneurship, a minor in French also from CU Boulder, and a Masters in International and Intercultural Communication from the University of Denver's Josef Korbel School of International Studies and the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. Rajabi is a scholar of development, international relations, feminist theory, and communication. Her research interests include international communication, trans-national boundaries, and the way culture, particularly popular culture in digital media, has consequences for social systems and movements. Her most recent work at the University of Colorado’s College of Media, Communication and Information, focused on the affordances of various media technology to enable individuals suffering from an array of traumatic experiences to make meaning and contend with extreme trauma. Rajabi has presented her work nationally and internationally including at the International Society of Media, Religion and Culture’s conferences in Turkey, the United Kingdom, and South Korea. She has also participated in the Center for Media, Religion and Culture's biannual conference since 2011. Rajabi published her work on the 2009 Iranian Green Movement in an edited volume from SUNY press titled *Social Media in Iran*. She has worked as a Senior Fellow at the University of Colorado’s Center for Media, Religion and Culture since 2012. Samira’s work attempts to bridge public scholarship, academia, and social justice advocacy with leadership in her community. Rajabi also spends her time teaching, writing for various publications, and volunteering with Rotary International.

**Philippe-Joseph Salazar** is a Distinguished Professor in Rhetoric in the Faculty of Law at the University of Cape Town, and a graduate of Ecole Normale Supérieure and the Sorbonne (Paris). He is Director of the Centre for Rhetoric Studies and a former Director in Rhetoric and Democracy at Jacques Derrida’s foundation, College International de Philosophie, Paris. He is the 2008 laureate of the Harry Oppenheimer award as well as a laureate in 2015 of the French Prix Bristol des Lumières (awarded for the best essay in political ideas), for his book on the rhetoric of jihadist terrorism, *Paroles Armées* (now published in four languages). He is editor-in-chief of “Power of Persuasion,” a series devoted to rhetoric and politics at France’s oldest publisher in the Social Sciences, Klincksieck and founding editor of the *African Yearbook of Rhetoric*. He has held a number of prestigious guest appointments and invitations in France, Russia, Canada, Morocco, Sweden and the United States, and leads a number of international projects in public rhetoric. Among his many publications, which span a wide field of enquiry in the theory, history and culture of rhetoric, his *African Athens* (2002), *Amnistier l’Apartheid* (2004), *Mahomet* (2005), and *Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa. The Fundamental Documents* (2007, co-authored) have garnered special praises. Among his recent books: *Paroles de Leaders* (2011) and *De l’art de séduire l’électeur indécis* (2012) have helped familiarize the French public with rhetoric in public affairs.

Mohammed A. Salih is a doctoral student at the Annenberg School for Communication and a CARGC Doctoral Fellow. He is primarily interested in extremist movements in the Middle East, and also the intersection of media, politics, and culture in that region. Prior to joining Annenberg, Salih worked for a number of years as a freelance journalist covering the Islamic State conflict as well as reporting on Kurdish and Iraqi affairs for international news outlets. His journalistic reports have appeared in Inter Press Service (IPS), Al Jazeera English, Al-Monitor, Foreign Policy, Christian Science Monitor, FRANCE24, Newsweek Middle East, The Washington Post and The New York Times. He has also published analytical pieces with Middle East Institute and The Washington Institute for Near East Policy on local politics of Kurdistan. He is a member of the Jihadi Networks Of Culture & Communications (JINCS) Research Group at CARGC.

Rafia Zakaria is an author, editor and attorney. She has been a weekly columnist for DAWN, Pakistan’s largest and oldest English language daily since 2009. Her column is syndicated in newspapers all over the world through the Inter Press Service and is regularly republished in the Deccan Chronicle, The Wire India, Kathmandu Post, Sri Lanka Guardian, Korea Herald, New Straits Times and The International, among others. She writes the “Alienated” column for The Baffler and has previously been a regular columnist for Al Jazeera America. She also writes regularly for Guardian Books and is a CNN Opinion contributor. Her recent New York Times Op-Ed “The Myth of Women’s Empowerment” was shared over 30K times on Facebook. From 2009-2015 Rafia served on Board of Directors of Amnesty International USA and was the first Pakistani-American woman to do so. In Fall 2016 she was part of the “How Should Journalism Cover Terrorism” Project at the Tow Center for Digital Journalism at Columbia University. In Fall 2017, she, along with political scientists Kate Cronin-Furman and Nimmi Gowrinathan, published the “Emissaries of Empowerment” report for the Colin Powell Center for Civic and Public Leadership. The report (which calls out racism in women’s empowerment initiatives in international development) was featured in The New York Times, The Washington Post and The Guardian. Rafia is the author of two books, The Upstairs Wife: An Intimate History of Pakistan, which selected one of the “Best Non-fiction Books of 2015” by Newsweek and Veil (2017). She is currently under contract for a third book, A Different Life with Beacon Press.
Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication

Inaugural Year Events

CARGC Distinguished Lecture in Global Communication & Master Class

October 17th
with Saskia Sassen, Columbia University

CARGC Symposium

April 5th & 6th
Mediating Islamic State

CARGC Colloquia and Panels

September 14th
"Filming and Viewing Transnational Surrogacy in India: Documentary Film and Assisted Reproductive Technologies"
Nadja-Christina Schneider, Humboldt University of Berlin

October 5th
"Media and Communications" Chapter Launch, International Panel on Social Progress
Nick Couldry, London School of Economics and Political Science
Clemencia Rodríguez, Temple University
Marwan M. Kraidy, CARGC Director

November 2nd
"Revamping Gender: Nostalgia and Affect in Beirut’s Musical Cabarets"
Rayya El Zein, CARGC Postdoctoral Fellow, Annenberg School for Communication

January 18th
"Geopolitics & Media in the Gulf"
Hebah Bukhari, San Diego State University
Lina Khatib, Chatham House
Marc Lynch, George Washington University

February 1st
"Mediating Possibility after Suffering: Meaning Making of the Micro-political through Digital Media"
Samira Rajabi, CARGC Postdoctoral Fellow, Annenberg School for Communication

March 1st
"Contextualizing Hacktivism: The Criminalization of RedHack"
Bulay Dogan, CARGC Research Fellow, Annenberg School for Communication

March 15th
"Street Art at the Border: Exploring Anti-Trump Graffiti and Artwork at the US-Mexico Border"
Julia Becker, CARGC Undergraduate Fellow

CARGC Book Talks

August 31st
The Media Commons: Globalization and Environmental Discourses
Patrick Murphy, Temple University

September 11th
An Unlikely Audience: Al Jazeera’s Struggle in America
William Youmans, The George Washington University

September 25th
Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism
Maria Repnikova, Georgia State University, CARGC Alumna (book written during Postdoctoral Fellowship at CARGC)

February 19th
Futures of Black Radicalism
Gaye Theresa Johnson, University of California at Los Angeles
Alex Lubin, University of New Mexico

March 15th
Vietnamese Popular Television and Post-Reform National Belonging
Nguyen Thu Giang, Vietnam National University in Hanoi

March 19th
Hollywood Made in China
Aynne Kokas, University of Virginia
The Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania produces and promotes scholarly research on global communication and public life. As an institute for advanced study dedicated to global media studies, we revisit enduring questions and engage pressing matters in geopolitics and communication. Our vision of “inclusive globalization” recognizes plurality and inequality in global media, politics, and culture. Our translocal approach fuses multidisciplinary regional knowledge with theory and methodology in the humanities and social sciences. This synthesis of deep expertise and interdisciplinary inquiry stimulates critical conversations about entrenched and emerging communicative structures, practices, flows, and struggles. We explore new ways of understanding and explaining the world, including public scholarship, algorithmic culture, the arts, multi-modal scholarship, and digital archives. With a core commitment to the development of early career scholars worldwide, CARGC hosts postdoctoral, doctoral, undergraduate, and faculty fellows who collaborate in research groups, author CARGC Press publications, and organize talks, lectures, symposia, conferences, and summer institutes.