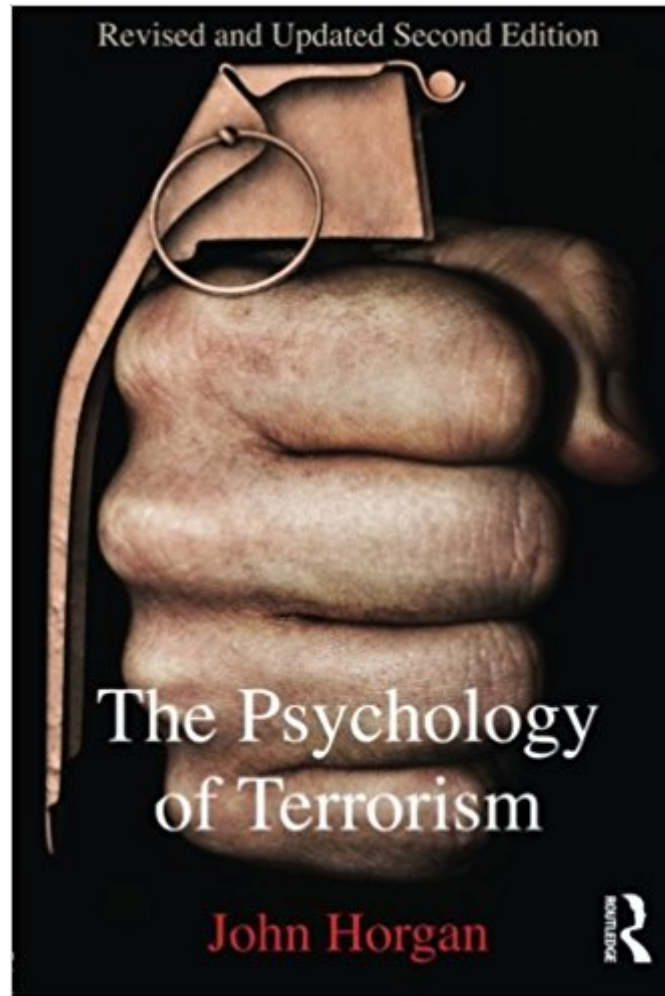




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# The Psychology Of Terrorism (Political Violence)



## Synopsis

This new edition of John Horgan's critically acclaimed book is fully revised and expanded. The book presents a critical analysis of our existing knowledge and understanding of terrorist psychology. Despite the on-going search for a terrorist pathology, the most insightful and evidence-based research to date not only illustrates the lack of any identifiable psychopathology in terrorists, but demonstrates how frighteningly 'normal' and unremarkable in psychological terms are those who engage in terrorist activity. By producing a clearer map of the processes that impinge upon the individual terrorist, a different type of terrorist psychology emerges, one which has clearer implications for efforts at countering and disrupting violent extremism in today's world. In this 2nd edition, Horgan further develops his approach to the arc of terrorism by delving deeper into his IED model of Involvement, Engagement and Disengagement – the three phases of terrorism experienced by every single terrorist. Drawing on new and exciting research from the past decade, with new details from interviews with terrorists ranging from al-Qaeda to left-wing revolutionaries, biographies and autobiographies of former terrorists, and insights from historic and contemporary terrorist attacks since 2005, Horgan presents a fully revised and expanded edition of his signature text. This new edition of *The Psychology of Terrorism* will be essential reading for students of terrorism and political violence, and counterterrorism studies, and recommended for forensic psychology, criminology, international security and IR in general.

## Book Information

Series: Political Violence

Paperback: 206 pages

Publisher: Routledge; 2 edition (June 18, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0415698022

ISBN-13: 978-0415698023

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.5 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #172,701 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #188 in Books > Politics &

Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Political Freedom #227 in Books >

Medical Books > Psychology > Applied Psychology #366 in Books > Politics & Social

Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Terrorism

## Customer Reviews

John Horgan reminds us that although there is no pathology that explains all terrorists or their crimes, nonetheless, individual choice matters. This book provides an important contribution to our understanding of the political psychology of terrorism. Essential reading for both students and terrorism professionals, from one of the world's best informed and wisest analysts of terror.

— Jessica Stern, Harvard University, USA

'This is an important revision to a book already well established as a leader in the area. The new material brings it up to date, and extends the analysis, increasing its relevance. The role of psychology in understanding terrorism has become much more important, and this book contributes to that improved understanding.'

— Max Taylor, University of St Andrews, UK

'One of the best applications of psychology to explain the drivers that motivate individuals to become terrorists, function as terrorists, and, in ideal cases, disengage from terrorism.'

— Joshua Sinai, *Terrorism Bookshelf: Top 150 Books on Terrorism and Counterterrorism*

— Perspectives on Terrorism

"The bottom line: no one knows how to do counterterrorism better because (a) the right research has not been done and (b) even if unbiased scholars figured out what seems to work, practitioners disabled by cognitive bias and personal agendas may not listen. Horgan admits that this might seem depressing, but his candor is uplifting. It's high time to expose and overcome the structural, political, and psychological underpinnings of our continued homeland insecurity. Ultimately, the conclusion of this excellent book is a dignified call for new thinking on terrorism and how to counter it with increasing sophistication and success." Dr. Jeff Victoroff is Associate Professor of Clinical Neurology and Psychiatry, University of Southern California.

John Horgan is Professor of Security Studies and Director of the Center for Terrorism and Security Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, USA. He is co-editor of *The Future of Terrorism* (Cass 2000, with Max Taylor) and the *Terrorism Studies Reader* (Routledge 2011, with Kurt Braddock), and author of *The Psychology of Terrorism* (Routledge 2005), *Walking Away from Terrorism* (Routledge 2009) and, most recently, *Divided We Stand: The Strategy and Psychology of Ireland's Dissident Terrorists* (2013).

Not for laymen. The author makes several important points suggesting that the way we study terrorism and terrorists is all wrong. Good read. But he is very theoretical (though he relies heavily on research evidence to back up his arguments) and can be difficult to follow.

A very good and readable presentation on the current knowledge related understanding the psychology of terrorism. The book can stand alone but also be a required or optional assignment in a course on terrorism. I strongly recommend it.

Good reading. Offers great insight!

One of my favorite reads on the subject of counter terrorism.

Too much information about PIRA, too easy example. It requires more information about other terrorists groups for a deeper analysis

Under review- book looks interesting and am looking forward to finding time to spend with the book. Looks informative. Goodf

Excellent new edition of this important book. Horgan's research is an authoritative source of information on the motivations and perceptions of individuals who engage in or seek to justify terrorist violence. The book offers the most insightful and evidence-based research available, presented in a clear and accessible way. It will be an essential resource for anyone studying terrorism.

Horgan's work on *The Psychology of Terrorism* offers very useful materials for terrorism researchers with regard to the different phases traversed by people involved in terrorist activities (e.g., becoming, being, and disengaging). He views this as a human-process with distinctive transitions rather than a single label, "terrorist." This work can be of value to counterterrorism organizations in that the path to terrorism (becoming) and disengaging in terrorist activities become clearer and definable. I was also interested in the discussions on incidents and inclinations, and social and individual problems. I recommend this book to those interested in terrorism as an individual psychological process, particularly as a primary research reference. For me this book serves as an authoritative source for my research studies, some of which I reference in my book on [...]. I look forward to purchasing the next edition of the work and exploring the new and updated materials.

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