



Female Terrorist. *Institute for Security Studies*, June 25, 2015. <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/why-are-young-women-drawn-to-extremism>

# ***OLD STEREOTYPES, NEW MEDIA***

The Representation of Female Terrorists in Alternative News Media

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*“Testosterone has always had a lot to do with terrorism”*

– Christopher Dickey and Gretel C. Kovach in “Married to Jihad” *Newsweek* (2002, 48)

## ABSTRACT

In the past two decades, the attention for terrorism in the news has exploded. But an omnipresent belief about terrorism brought by media, is that all terrorists are male, and women do not fit the terrorist profile. However, women have always been actively participating in terrorist groups across the world and a more accurate representation of female terrorists is therefore needed. This proposal is grounded in media and gender studies and will provide more insights into the representation of female terrorists in alternative news media. An extensive literature review and methodology resulted in a pre-tested analytical framework, providing the tools for future research on this topic. The expected outcomes will be further understanding the construction and definition of female terrorists in alternative news media compared to the coverage of mainstream media, which fills in an important gap in the existing literature on this topic.

*Keywords:* mainstream news media, alternative news media, stereotypes, gender, female terrorists, critical discourse analysis, social cognition

*Type of project:* research proposal

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## 1: INTRODUCTION

In 2016, the Dutch news headlines were packed with the story of Laura H., the first Dutch woman returning from the caliphate in Syria. Laura left with her husband and children to IS stronghold Mosul where she allegedly escaped one year later. Once arrived back in the Netherlands, she was immediately arrested on suspicion of participating in a terrorist organization. Surprisingly, most of the news reports did not focus on the potential danger that Laura H. could form for the Dutch society but referred to her in innocent terms as 'jihad bride' and 'caliphate girl' (Rosman 2018). The portrayal of Laura H. in the Dutch news media shows that the omnipresent belief brought by the media about terrorism is that terrorists are male, and women do not fit the terrorist profile (Banks 2019; Nacos 2005). Nonetheless, women have always been actively participating in terrorist groups across the world. Nowadays, it is estimated that more than thirty percent of international terrorists are women (Harmon 2007). The ignorance and indifference towards female terrorists can be explained by the fact that they still form a minority within terrorist groups, but also because of old-fashioned gender stereotypes that are still very present in our modern society (Banks 2019).

However, the news landscape has changed drastically the last years, and the arrival of alternative news media brings a more critical voice in regard to topics relating culture, identity and social inequalities to our attention (Joye 2009). Therefore, it could be expected that their news reporting also presents a less stereotypical and more comprehensive view on complex issues such as terrorism and gender.

The aim of this study is to analyse how female terrorists are portrayed in alternative news media, and to investigate their use of traditional gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes reinforce deep-rooted societal attitudes towards gender. The dominant discourse in the media still represents women as inferior to men, which has immersive effects on the attitude towards, and the treatment of men and women in society in terms of gender equality (Mendes and Carter 2008). This is also something terrorist groups can take advantage of. Women already generate less suspicion and are perceived as less dangerous than men, which makes it easier for them to pass security checks or hide explosives (O'Rourke 2009). If stereotypical views on gender keep being reinforced in the media and our view on gender will not change, women and men will still not enjoy the same treatment in society. Subsequently, terrorist groups can use this dominant stereotype of the inferiority of women by increasing the number of women on tactical positions within their organizations, which can lead up to a serious threat for society. Therefore, it is necessary to gain more insights in the current reporting on female terrorists, in order to contribute little by little on a more permanent change in the representation of gender in news

media. The portrayal of female terrorists in mainstream media has been researched previously to some extent, but with the latest developments in the news environment and the rising popularity of alternative news media, it becomes essential to research how these platforms approach female terrorists in order to enrich current insights on this topic.

## 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study will use the perspectives from gender and media studies and aims to connect those with the conceptual frameworks of critical theory, critical discourse analysis and social cognition to be able to provide a comprehensive understanding of the representation of gender in news media.

### 2.1: Gender studies and gender stereotypes

The concept of gender is interesting because even though the differences between sexes are determined by biological processes, the meaning of gender changes within society, and it is mostly culture that determines what is masculine and feminine. The field of gender studies helps explaining this process (Mendes and Carter 2008). Gender within this field is interpreted as “the roles and responsibilities of men and women that have been constructed by society, in a given culture and location” (Sharda 2014, 44). With their inevitable presence in society, media have a significant influence on the image of gender. The Global Media Monitoring Project studies the representation of gender in news media around the world. The results of 2015 revealed that women only take up twenty-four percent of all subjects mentioned in news reports. Meaning that women are still underrepresented in news reports, and by this, a false image of the greater importance of men is created. Besides, gender stereotypes are still very present in news reports, the Global Media Monitoring Project demonstrated that only four percent of the news items would openly challenge gender stereotypes (Macharia 2015). Shortly put stereotypes are “pictures in the head”; generalized ideas and beliefs about different societal groups (Lippmann 1922). The process of stereotyping, described by Vinacke (1949), can be defined as “the tendency to attribute generalized and simplified characteristics to groups of people in the form of verbal labels” (Vinacke 1949, 265). These generalized beliefs are constructed, shared, supported and reinforced in society and help us to simplify the world around us. They usually fit with dominant beliefs that are already present in society and are therefore well-known, comfortable and easy to use when we try to make sense of our social world (Lippmann 1922). Gender stereotypes are one of the most profound stereotypes in current society and can be defined as “beliefs about certain attributes that differentiate how

women and men are (descriptive beliefs), or should be (prescriptive beliefs), and frequently address physical characteristics, role behaviours and occupations” (Ward and Grower 2020, 178). According to dominant gender stereotypes, women are mostly linked to characteristics as dependent, emotional, weak, modest and caring, while men are usually characterized as strong, competent, aggressive and important (Sharda 2014). Gender stereotypes are powerful and can have a serious impact on our perceptions of gender and our social behaviour towards gender (Wood 1994).

## **2.2: Framing**

A more extensive explanation of how gender stereotypes are integrated and reinforced in the media can be found in the theory of framing. The presence of the media in our daily lives is so substantial that is hard not to use the views presented in the media as a reference point for our own thoughts, opinions and identity. Especially in regard to news reporting, we are highly dependent on the media to experience and understand events that we cannot observe directly. As Walter Lippmann (1922) stated, the news is responsible for creating a pseudo-environment; a perception of the world in which distant experiences and events are presented to us. When there is lack of first-hand experiences, the second-hand information provided by the media becomes an important source for our understanding of society and attitudes towards others. This can be positive, the media can inform people about the world around them, familiarizes them with diversity and supports solidarity. But negative frames and stereotypes can also reinforce social problems such as discrimination and social inequality.

The way information is communicated in the media and the possible consequences of this, is highly dependent on the choices made by journalists. Journalists must pick the elements of an event or situation from which they think it will cover it in the most appealing and comprehensible way (Moy, Tewksbury and Rinke 2016). One of those choices made by journalists is selecting the frame for the article, which is explained by Entman (1993) as “selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Entman 1993, 52). The framing of an event, problem or situation plays a central part in how the news story is told, and how the audience eventually will process the information they encounter in the news. The dominant culture of a society is the main source of ways to interpret the world around us, and frames used in news reports mostly originate from this culture and the set of social norms which the journalist and audience are familiar with (Scheufele 1999). By framing a news report

according to the predominant social values and norms, the article will immediately fit with the audience's beliefs which makes it easier and more pleasant to read and understand it. Frames that have been used regularly in the news, are easy to process, and help the audience to give meaning and understand complex issues by embedding them in consistent, predictable and familiar narratives (Norris, Kern and Just 2003). But these well-known frames are also very persistent and can contain traditional generalizations and stereotypes on concepts such as gender, that have been embedded in the dominant culture for a long time. By sticking to these frames, the media can influence reinforcing deep-rooted social issues and inequalities.

### **2.3: Critical Discourse Analysis**

To further uncover the underlying processes of gender stereotyping in news reports, critical discourse analysis will be used as an overarching theoretical framework for this study. Discourse can be understood in many ways, but this study will use Van Dijk's (1990) interpretation of discourse as a specific form of language use and a specific form of social interaction. Discourses are created by groups of individuals that are subject to many different social processes, and analysing discourse is therefore mostly concerned with revealing these social phenomena behind words and the power structures hidden within them. With the use of critical discourse analysis, defined as "a field of discourse analysis research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in social and political contexts", these social processes can be uncovered and addressed (van Dijk, 2004, 352). Critical discourse analysis is grounded in the Critical Theory because of its focus on social wrongs and which social practices lead up to these social wrongs (Fairclough 2009). The goal is not only to describe existing realities but trying to explain them by revealing the hidden manipulations within them and improving communication by challenging the issues that these manipulations legitimize (Sriwimon and Zili 2017; Tenorio 2011). Applying the critical discourse approach to the field of media studies and gender stereotypes can help reveal signs of social power abuse, dominance, inequality and the misrepresentation of gender that might be hidden in the text of news articles on female terrorists. This is important because as mentioned before, especially for the events happening outside our direct environment, we are highly depended on the news to inform us, causing the media in a powerful position to reflect reality in a certain way (Van Leeuwen 2008). News does not naturally emerge from facts that can be observed, the construction of news is a 'product' of an industry that is shaped by many different economic, social and political influences, which is especially evident in the writing process of news articles (Fowler 1991).



Because during this process, the elements of a social practice are transformed into language, into a discourse, and as soon as this happens, meanings are added to the social practice itself (Van Leeuwen 2008). The used language in news reports is namely not just a neutral reflection of the facts, every linguistic choice in a text has a reason behind it and reflects the ideological distinctions of a society (Fowler 1991). Discourse gives structure in how to address a certain topic in accordance with dominant social values, and therefore simultaneously provides descriptions and judgements on what is permissible within society and what is not.

The study of critical linguistics helps explaining how media texts are constructed and events are recontextualized by converting them from social practices to discourse about these social practices. One of the main aspects involved in this construction and recontextualization of events for news reports is the way social actors and social actions are represented. By including or excluding certain social actors and actions, the entire meaning of a discourse can change. The representation of social actors and actions happens in many subtle ways, but for this topic it will be interesting to see how the social actions executed by social actors, in this case terrorist acts performed by women, are being translated into news reports. Framing is one of the aspects related to this, framing is in the end a process of conscious lexical choices made by journalists for describing events and the people involved in it. But frames can contain dominant social opinions and stereotypes that can cause or reinforce inequalities in society and discrimination of certain groups, that usually serve as a way of protection for the most dominant in-group in a society. This is further explained in the concept of the legitimation of social actions. After all, the recontextualization of social actions into discourse also adds specific legitimations of social practices that try to explain why things are done in a particular way (Van Leeuwen, 2008). Legitimation within a text can happen in different ways, by involving authorities to review the social practice, or by morally evaluating the practice based on values. In any way, the slightest lexical choices can contain judgements and have an influence on how the audience evaluates the social practice in the end (Van Leeuwen 2008). Some of these legitimations within discourse have to do with maintaining unequal practices in society out of protection for the most dominant group, because it provides a way to express dominant stereotypes and frame them as ‘common-sense’ to the audience, by which they will be maintained and reinforced. In regard to this study, legitimating gender inequalities within discourse can serve the most dominant group in the current male-dominated society.

#### **2.4: Social cognition**

So far, most focus have been laid on the construction of news discourses. But the real

construction of meaning and interpretation of words happens within the individuals who write and read them. To fully understand this cognitive process, a final theoretical connection to social cognition is made. Social cognition can bring together the theories and concepts that have been presented before and can form a bridge between the processes of framing, the presence of gender stereotypes within discourse and the influence of discourse on public opinion. Cognition can be seen as the mental processes necessary to obtain and process information and is influenced by, and acquires information from, so called “social representations” which are shared values, norms or concepts within a social group (Moscovici 2000). Social cognition specifically appoints the way reality is constructed and is an important part of both the production as the comprehension of discourse (Van Dijk 1990). According to the approach of social cognition, language users engage in texts not only in the role of writer or reader, but also as a part of their social group. And they are influenced by the particular social representations from their social group during the interaction with discourse (Van Dijk 1997). When applied to the field of this research, gender and gender stereotypes can be classified as socially constructed concepts as well. And the way discourse in regard to gender is being constructed, framed and interpreted is highly influenced by the social cognition of different social groups. That is why for instance news reports could never be a completely neutral reflection of facts, because they have to be communicated through media channels that have their methods according to specific social values and are written by journalists that are also participants in a society. Considering the process of social cognition while addressing gender representations according to the critical discourse analysis approach can help explain the underlying meaning and origin of the representation of female terrorists in news media. For a complete overview, all concepts are put together in the conceptual framework below.

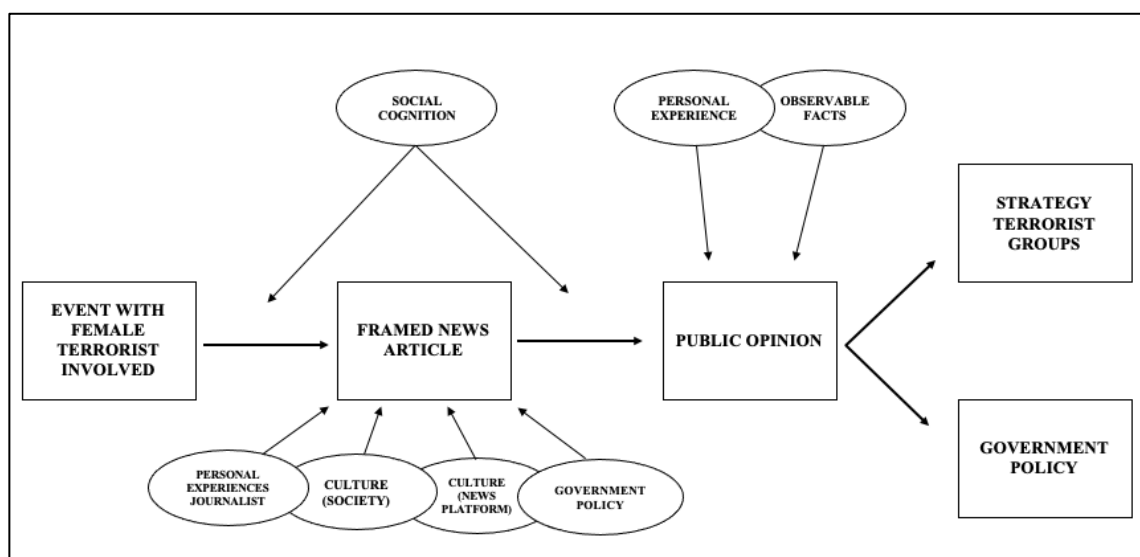


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

### 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 3.1: Terrorism

Terrorism has been of interest for many researchers in many fields but is hard to define because it comes in many different forms. Most definitions of terrorism include at least the aspect of violence or the threat of violence, and the possible motivations behind these acts of violence, such as religious, economic or political motivations (Mahan and Griset 2013). Generalizations about terrorists, their background and their motivations are often made. Research showed that in the last decade the Western public associates terrorists mostly with Muslim (male) fighters that are part of a bigger organization, performing violence for religious reasons (Huff and Kertzer 2018). Women that are involved in terrorism are mostly believed to be the victims of violence, and not the perpetrators. However, several researchers claim that the female involvement in terrorism increased over time and that they are not so different from men (Lobao 1999; Schalk 1994). Employing women for terroristic purposes has been researched by O'Rourke (2009) and showed that women were specifically recruited by terrorist organizations to increase the fear and attention for terrorist causes, and to expend the number of recruits. It also uncovered that women are still not taken seriously as terrorists because they do not fit in the stereotypical image and therefore are less suspicious and have greater options to secretly plan and perform violent actions while being subjected to less security measures compared to men (O'Rourke 2009).

#### 3.2: Media coverage on terrorism and the influence of gender

In the end, the reaction of the audience to a terrorist attack is just as important as the act itself, as the famous words of Margaret Thatcher (1985) described: "the media provides terrorism with the 'oxygen of publicity' on which terrorist organizations depend". Simultaneously, terrorism also offers exceptional, shocking and dramatic events, which are highly newsworthy and are, as stated by Nacos and Bloch-Elkon (2011, 692), exactly what "contemporary media crave the most". This symbiotic relationship between the media and terrorist groups has been subject of several studies. Research by Shoshani and Slone (2008, 628) referred to this as the "theatre of terror", the dramatic staging of terrorist attacks by terrorist organizations can be seen as an almost theatrical exploitation of the media to display their capabilities and achieve as much attention as possible. Findings of a research by Papacharissi and De Fatima Oliveira (2008) corresponds with this 'theatre of terror' concept. They revealed that news coverage of terrorism in mainstream media often follows the dramatic, thematic and episodic intentions of terrorist organizations and negativity, violence and military action predominate, instead of the

complexity of the conflict or the diplomacy involved. Especially since 9/11, the framing of terrorism has changed drastically into a new and globally used ‘war on terrorism’ frame which helped journalists to use cohesive and simple narratives to explain recent terrorist events and complex foreign policy to the audience (Norris, Just and Kern 2003).

The representation of female terrorists in news media is thereby a particular case. Research of Friedman (2008) showed that news items about female suicide bombers explicitly mentioned that the perpetrators were not only ‘suicide bomber’ but ‘female suicide bombers’, while for male perpetrators of similar attacks in the same period, such an explicit mentioning of their gender was not given. This suggests that a male perpetrator is the ‘standard’ and the fact that there were ‘female’ perpetrators involved made the story even more newsworthy (Friedman 2008). The research by Nacos (2005) on the framing of female terrorists and the female politicians can be considered as the foundation for future research on this topic. This study showed the similarities between the reporting on female terrorists and female politicians in six dominant frames in mainstream media. The first is the focus on the physical appearance of women. Female terrorists are often described by means of their looks and pleasant appearance, to increase the contrast between them and their violent actions. Another widely used frame is emphasizing the family background of female terrorists. Implications are made about women being forced by family members to join and their family background gets far more attention than the family background of male terrorists. This compels with the third frame, being a terrorist for the sake of love. A persistent image of female terrorists is that they do not have their own significant motives to join, but they follow, or are forced by their husbands to join terrorist groups. These are questionable stereotypical views on gender, which deny a women’s capability to make her own decisions and decrease her credibility. This is also reflected in the fourth frame, in which women that join a terrorist group are considered to be bored, naïve and out of touch with reality. Research on male terrorists have never shown any of these as a motivation for their participation in terrorist movements. On the flip side there is the women’s liberation frame, which portrays female terrorists as fighters for women liberation and gender equality. This is related to the fifth ‘tougher-than-men-frame’ in which female terrorists are considered as more fanatical and dangerous than men because they need to gain credibility and prove what they are worth within the organization (Nacos 2005).

More recently, Morgan and Chemak (2019) continued on the work of Nacos (2005), using the United States Extremist Crime Data Base to test the presence of her six frames. They found two additional frames: the ‘disregarded frame’ which shows that some journalists do report on the actions performed by female terrorists but explicitly leave the details of the female

perpetrator out of the article, and the ‘over-shadowed frame’ in which the female perpetrator is mentioned but more attention is given to other (male) perpetrators or other details.

These results are contradictory to the frames found by Friedman (2008). She performed a study on four United States mainstream news sources and their coverage of female terrorists and the frames that were used to explain the motivations of female terrorists to perform violent acts. According to Friedman, female terrorists were not disregarded or overshadowed but on the contrary, explicitly mentioned, emphasizing the abnormality of women performing violent acts. In total five dominant themes were found to describe female terrorists’ motivations. The first suggests using women as a new strategic ‘weapon of war’. The second frames implies that women are influenced or pressured by men. Third, women that are handling out of strong emotional reasons, or out of desperation suggesting that female terrorists had no other way out of their harsh environment, or they had failed in the ‘feminine role’ of wife and mother and therefore had no other choice then to join a terrorist organization. Last, liberation suggests that women are just acting out on their oppressed position and therefore become terrorists. The study showed how there is still a firm belief that women are not violent in itself, nor capable of making their own informed decisions but get influenced by people or conditions. Female terrorists are according to this an abnormality, and profound speculations are made about their possible motivations to perform these acts, while for men, the media never undertook this much effort to understand the reasons behind their acts (Friedman 2008).

The outcomes of a study by Gardner (2007) on international newspapers one year earlier are consistent with the results Friedman (2008) found. First of all, she found out that almost all news items are not written from the perspective of the female terrorist, but instead are highly speculative, marginalizing the voice of female terrorists. She found eight dominant categories that were used to describe female terrorists and their motivations: nationalism, revenge, desire for martyrdom, escape, victimizations, religious causes, redemption and feminist pride. Besides these categories, Gardner also found some descriptive factors that are frequently used to describe female terrorists. She found for example that there is a huge focus on the demographics of female terrorists, their hometown, their age, their marital status and whether they have children or not. Also, a lot of attention is given to the appearance of female terrorists, the way they dress and whether they carry weapons or not. The conclusion of Gardner is similar to Friedman’s; profound speculations are being made about female terrorists’ possible motivations, that are mostly originating from the journalists themselves and not from the female terrorists involved (Gardner 2007).

To conclude, Plaza, Rivas-Nieto and Rey-Garcia (2017) constructed four dominant news frames on the roles of female terrorists used in Spanish newspapers. According to this study, the exceptionalism frame is used a lot to emphasise the abnormality of women performing violence. Second, the expert frame implies that women are only used by terrorist organizations as reliable experts in the Western world to recruit new allies. The sensationalism frame overrepresents the stereotype of women being victims of the violence instead of the perpetrators in a highly sensationalized manner. Last, the bravery frame contradicts the sensationalism frame and portrays women as warriors, bravely fighting along men (Plaza, Rivas-Nieto and Rey-Garcia 2017).

So far, research on this topic has only focussed on the representation on female terrorists in Western mainstream news media that are part of huge media corporations. However, the discourse used in those mainstream news media often align their way of reporting on events with the dominant (and often stereotypical) views within society on concepts such as gender. In the Western society, the idea of male dominance is still persistently present, and these research projects underlined this once again, most of the frames that have been used in mainstream media are constructed from a male-dominant perspective, positioning women in an inferior position. But a similar study on the news reports of alternative media has not been done yet, their approach to journalism, which will be further addressed in the next section, could add some new and different insights to the representation of female terrorists.

### **3.3: Alternative media**

To fill in the mentioned information gap, the journalistic ideology of alternative news media will be further explored. The term ‘alternative’ in relation to media has been subject of many studies and is not easily captured in a comprehensive and unambiguous definition. Often, alternative news media is put as an ‘alternative’, or as an ‘opposite’ to mainstream news media. Therefore, it is first necessary to distinguish the characteristics of mainstream news media. According to Holt, Figenschou and Frischlich (2019) mainstream media can be considered as a dominant societal system formed by big media organizations with a certain hierarchical structure, that publish according to traditional journalistic routines based on facts and professional rules. The definition of Atton (2002, 2) on mainstream news media complies with this, stating that mass media are “based on a complex of newsroom routines and rituals, conditions of production, notions of professionalism and objectivity, and rehearsed standards of writing and editing”. They are usually large-scale state-owned or commercial companies, staffed by professionals and focused on output for a large homogenous audience within society,



integrating dominant discourses of society in their reports (Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier 2008). Because of the profound presence of mainstream media and their constant exposure to the audience, mainstream media are capable to construct and reinforce dominant views on reality by defining which issues the audience gets to see and how to present them, in which priority is mainly given to the views of important social actors such as politicians and private influentials (Atton 2002).

Alternative news media on the other hand, can be considered as correcting traditional news media by providing more diversity and alternative explanations and interpretations of issues and arrange alternative distribution methods (Holt, Figenschou and Frischlich 2019). Although the concept of alternative media is hard to capture in one sentence, Forde (2011, 45) recognized one consistent message of alternative media which is “to give a voice to the voiceless, to fill the gaps left by the mainstream, to empower ordinary people to participate in many social instances, and to educate people with information they cannot access elsewhere”. The main goal for alternative media is to encourage social change by giving people from all societal groups the opportunity to let their voices be heard (Atton 2002). Research by Harcup (2005) acknowledges this and showed that alternative news media can be used to defend different ideological ideas and different news values than provided by mainstream news media. Of course, this is more easily said than done, because contesting mainstream media also means contesting established societal constructs about reality itself.

Nonetheless, alternative media come in many different forms and portraying alternative media just as the ‘opposite’ of mainstream media is too simplistic. Both fields cannot be seen as homogenous sectors in which all journalists follow an identical approach to journalism, but both consist of several heterogenous subsectors and are subject to constant changes (Harcup 2015). In their work *Understanding Alternative Media*, Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier (2008) distinguish four different theoretical approaches to alternative media ranging from alternative media being a service for the community to considering alternative media as a ‘third voice’ besides state media and private commercial media as a crucial part of democracy. For this study the comparison between the journalistic approach of mainstream and alternative news media in regard to female terrorists is mostly of interest, and therefore their approach of alternative media as an as an addition, or ‘counter-hegemonic critique’ to mainstream news media will be used. According to this view, alternative media are seen as ‘alternative’ on both the organization level, being independent from state and market, and content level, offering different opinions and representations than mainstream media (Bailey, Cammaerts, and Carpentier 2008, 15). Continuing with this approach, the following characteristics of

alternative media will be taken into account: progressive small-scale and independent media companies, orientated towards specific audiences, explicitly opposed to particular forms of domination and commercial motives, openly taking positions about issues instead of striving for objectivity, including voices that are underrepresented in mainstream media, propagate non-dominant discourses, encouraging participation for non-professionals in media output, aimed at building up solidarity and support within society (Atton 2002; Hackett and Carroll 2006; Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier 2008; Holt, Figenschou and Frieslich 2019).

Following from this, the ethical approach to journalism of alternative media is more focused on the people that are involved in the news stories and the audience, rather than on the traditional values of professionalism and objectivity that is often the most important journalistic approach for mainstream media. This alternative approach is also referred to as the ‘ethics of active listening’ in which the traditional role of journalists as ‘gatekeepers’, where the journalist decides what the audience will see and read about, transforms into the role of journalists as ‘gate openers’, where the journalist opens up the news production process by involving the subjects of the news in the writing process (Wasserman 2013).

This approach to alternative journalism aligns with some major ethical principles of journalism. The ethical principle of justice, originating from the work of Rawls (1971) and applied to journalism states that journalist should treat every individual in a just way, addressing inequalities by trying to provide a complete, realistic and representative picture of all groups in society, providing the opportunity to give a voice to all of them, and trying to rearrange inequalities by asking critical questions in regard to the major institutions. A just journalist is aware of the consequences (whether positive or negative) their writing can have and will make sure that these consequences serve a justifiable purpose for every party involved. Alternative journalists focus on providing alternative views on the world, complementing the dominant views provided by mainstream media, and make sure all voices within society are being heard in a justifiable, honest and non-stereotypical way.

This complies with another major ethical principle in regard to journalism, the principle of responsibility. A responsible journalist is aware of the social needs within society and the role they can play as sources of information. Alternative journalists are conscious of their responsibility to the public, and therefore provide the information that gives a representative view on the world, as mentioned in the principle of justice, but also have attention for the rights of the public in regard to privacy and one’s public image (McQuail 1992). Alternative journalism is often committed to social justice by denoting the injustices within society, openly opposing any form of domination (Hackett 2010). The principle of truth completes this, truthful



journalists will provide their audience with a reliable and accurate account on events and will be as transparent as possible about their sources of information (McQuail 1992).

Combining these ethical principles, alternative journalists could make a difference by having a critical stance in regard to issues such as gender inequalities within society, representing (female) minorities involved in terrorism in an accurate, fair and non-stereotypical way and giving them the opportunity to speak for themselves but also taking into account their privacy and the public opinion that might evolve from their representation. With their increasing popularity and growing reach, alternative views presented by alternative media can form an opportunity for a less stereotypical discourse within society and the starting point of a change in the public opinion on concepts such as gender. But research on alternative media is still scarce and needs to be further explored. An answer will therefore be sought to the following questions:

**RQ 1:** How are female terrorists linguistically defined and constructed in alternative news media?

**RQ 2:** To what extent are traditional gender stereotypes used to describe female terrorists in the reporting of alternative news media?

**RQ 3:** To what extent does the reporting on female terrorists differ in alternative news media from mainstream news media?

This future research project aims to unravel the representation of female terrorists in alternative news media and the underlying social structures that influence the used discourse. First, because the use and reinforcement of traditional gender stereotypes in news media can work in the favour of terrorist organizations, underestimating the importance of women within these organizations can influence their strategy and eventually have severe consequences. But more insights on the representation of gender in news media and the use of gender stereotypes are also important to improve a more equal representation of gender in society. Research to the representation of female terrorists in alternative media has not been done yet and will help fill in a gap to further complement the knowledge on this topic. This dissertation will result in a pre-tested analytical framework grounded in an extensive theoretical and methodological framework to provide the tools that can be used for this future research.

## 4: METHODOLOGY

### 4.1: Analytical approach

The analytical approach for this research will originate from the field of critical discourse analysis, which can provide in-depth insights in the use of gender stereotypes in news reports and the hidden social practices behind it. For this, Fairclough's (1992a) three-dimensional approach to critical discourse analysis will be used. According to this approach discourse consists of three dimensions: text, discourse practices and social practices. The textual dimension is concerned with the linguistic description of the language that is used in news articles about female terrorists. Within the discursive dimension, an interpretation of the meaning of the descriptions is sought in which the focus lays on the relationships between discursive processes and the situational context in which the text is produced, distributed and consumed. The social dimension seeks an explanation for the connection between discursive practices and social practices and focusses on the context in which discursive practices take place, how discourse is established by social practices and what effect it can have on those practices (Fairclough 1992a). The aim of this approach is to uncover the used discourse for the representation of female terrorists, and to track down which situational and social practices influence this discourse. It will try to find out if the current social order supports gender inequality and gender stereotypes, in order to figure out if the dominant discourse on gender can be changed in any way, past the obstacles that there might be.

The general practical approach for this research will be based on the work of Mullet (2018) which consists of six steps. First a discourse has to be selected and prepared for the data analysis. Next, the background of each text has to be explored to define different aspects such as the purpose of the text, the intended audience and the characteristics of the publisher and the writer. This step can already reveal some of the situational and social practices that influence the discourse. After this, the actual coding of the texts starts, in which a thematic analysis will be done and an analysis of the internal and external relations in the text. The internal relations in a text will bring to light the aims of the text and how social actions and actors are represented by language. The external relations can show the interdiscursivity of the text and disclose the social practices that influence the production of the text, and the other way around, the influence of the text on social practices (Mullet 2018).

### 4.2: Sample and data collection

Following the steps of Mullet, the first act towards the analysis is to pick out discourses. The selection of discourse is a crucial step and can be approached in different ways. For this project,

the choice is made to start by looking into important events in which female terrorists were involved and from there, select alternative and mainstream news platforms and their reporting on the event for each case individually. By this, there is made sure that instead of just using a general selection of popular news platforms to seek for reporting on female terrorists, for each important case on female terrorists, news platforms are selected with actual significant reporting on it, and that fit well with the case based on the location of the event that happened, the proximity for certain audiences and political connections that are involved in the event. Research by Sternadori (2007) found out that the news coverage on female terrorists increased rapidly after some major events such as the Chechen women in Russia, the Palestinian suicide bombings and the uprising of Al-Qaeda from the early 2000's on. This research will therefore be focused on events that happened since then and uses cases and articles from the last ten years so the evolution of the coverage on female terrorists over time can be researched as well.

For the selection of the sample, a division is made into specific cases which revolve around a specific individual, and generic cases in which female terrorists are involved in general, but without mentioning specific individuals. This is done to be able to give a more complete overview of the topic, because it can be expected that both types of cases have a different journalistic approach, addressing an individual require different lexical choices than addressing generic cases.

A first look into the involvement of women in terrorism has led to a preliminary selection of four specific cases and four generic cases. These cases represent the involvement of female terrorism from different parts of the world and address different cultural, political and religious issues to give a more comprehensive overview. For each case, a selection of mainstream and alternative news platforms is made, based on their reporting and connection to the case. Every news platform included must meet the requirements that classify either alternative news media or mainstream news media.

The sampling process of the news articles consists of purposive sampling in which a sample of articles for each case is selected from which most conclusions can be drawn in regard to the reporting on female terrorists. The goal is to select information-rich cases that can be studied in depth. For collecting the final sample of articles, Factiva is used. Search terms were used to find relevant articles such as: "female terrorist", "female bomber", "female attacker", "female extremist", "female jihadi", specific organizations such as "Boko Haram + female", "Al-Shabaab + female", specific events in which women were involved, such as "suicide attack Pakistan + year", "attack Somalian governor + year", and specific names of women involved in terrorism such as "Safaa Boular" and "Samantha Lewthwaite".

These keywords have led to a preliminary sample of news articles categorized under four specific cases and four generic cases, which can be found in appendix 8.3. For each case, a minimum of two articles from mainstream sources, and two articles from alternative sources is selected. The URLs and the HTML copies of each of the articles will be saved during the analysis to secure the sample. The final sample of articles will be selected as soon as the research project starts, in order to maintain the flexibility to select interesting cases that might occur in the near future.

### *Case study*

In order to test the proposed analytical approach for future research, a small case study will be executed within this dissertation on one specific case and one general case, in order to make sure the analytical approach and the analytical framework, appointed later, will be useful for future research on both types of cases. As a specific case, the case of Samantha Lewthwaite is chosen. This case is interesting, not only because she is linked to the terrorist attacks in Kenya of 2013, but also because her whereabouts remain a mystery since then, so even after seven years reports are still written about her. This makes it a good case to investigate not only the case itself, but also the evolution of the reporting on her over time. As a generic case, a sample of news articles about the involvement of women in ISIS in the Middle East is chosen. Women have been involved in ISIS for several years which makes it good case with plenty of diverse reports that can be studied over time. The used sample for both case studies together consists of ten reports from mainstream news platforms (BBC, CNN, Daily Express, Daily Mail, The Guardian, The New York Times and The Sun), and seven reports from alternative news platforms (Alternet, Democracy Now!, openDemocracy and The Conversation). All of these platforms meet the requirements to be classified as alternative media, they are progressive independent media companies with the aim to provide non-dominant discourse to their audience and encouraging them to take an active stance towards social change, or as mainstream media, they are part of big media corporations and focussed on providing dominant discourses for a homogenous audience within society with an extensive reach and well-founded position within society which gives them the power to construct or influence the public opinion on important issues. An extensive description of the used media outlets can be found in Appendix 8.2. The unit of analysis will be all references to female terrorists within the reports.

### **4.3: Data analysis procedures**

The next step is to develop an analytical framework for the research on female terrorists based

on the existing literature on this topic and expectations for this research. The framework will be structured in accordance with the tree-dimensional approach of Fairclough (1992a) to describe, interpretate and explain the linguistics in combination with an interdiscursive situational and social analysis. The analytical framework further includes the work of Heberle (2000), integrating critical discourse analysis to gender studies, and the works of Nacos (2005), Gardner (2007), Friedman (2008) and Plaza, Rivas-Nieto and Rey-Garcia (2017) on the dominant frames in the reporting on female terrorists in mainstream media. For the categories on alternative news, the research of Harcup (2005), Hackett (2010) and Forde (2011) is used. The methods for the linguistical, thematic and societal analysis will be based on the works of Van Leeuwen (2008) and Halliday and Hasan (1989) to help place texts in a social context.

#### *4.3.1: Critical linguistics*

The first step of Fairclough's (1992a) three-dimensional approach focusses on the linguistic description of the language for which a text analysis will be performed that foremostly looks into the used vocabulary and grammar based on the analytical tools provided by Halliday (1994), Fowler (1991) and Fairclough (1992a, 1992b). In regard to vocabulary, it is of most interest to describe what kind of vocabulary predominates in the text and whether the words are more directed towards emotions or logical argumentation. Besides there will be looked into the verbs, nouns and adjectives that have been used to project actions and identities, and the used metaphors, synonyms or antonyms. Interesting here is to see what other choices could have been made in the use of words. For this research the connection to language and gender will be made based on the work of Heberle (2008) to uncover if the choice of words contains any signs of asymmetry between male and female relationships, if there are any traces of sexism and if the text contains any reference to gender stereotypes in general. The tools to reveal the presence of specific gender stereotypes in relation to female terrorists will be based on the works of Nacos (2005), Gardner (2007), Friedman (2008) and Plaza, Rivas-Nieto and Rey-Garcia (2017), mentioned before.

#### *4.3.2: Social actor analysis*

The second step of Fairclough's (1992a) three-dimensional approach is concerned with the interpretation of the meaning of the used words. With a social actor analysis, the socio-semantic choices of words and phrases that are used to represent female terrorists and the traits that are being assigned to them can be interpreted, as well as the situational context that might have

led up to these choices (Van Leeuwen 2008). For this research, the following analytical tools provided by Van Leeuwen (2008) will be used:

### *Exclusion*

Looking at the concept of exclusion will reveal whether there are references to certain involved social actors missing in the text (suppression) or if certain social actors are mentioned but are put more to the background or are mentioned without their connection to the involved action (exclusion).

### *Role allocation*

The role allocation within a text determines which roles social actors get assigned in a text, and whether social actors are represented as active dominant forces executing an action, or as passive actors that only undergo a certain action.

### *Genericization/specification and individualization/assimilation*

Addressing actors in generic or in specific terms, as specific individuals (individualization) or as a group as a whole (assimilation) can help explain if actors are just portrayed as statistics instead of specific individuals which undermines their unique character.

### *Personalization*

Social actors can be mentioned in a personal way referring to them as the human-beings they are, but they can also be impersonalized in a text, by which they will be represented by abstract wordings that does not include their humanness, such as abstraction (describes social actors according to a quality or status) or objectivation (describes social actors in terms of a place, an object or as a body part).

### *Functionalization/identification and classification*

Another way is exploring if actors are described in terms something they do (functionalization) or in terms of what they are (identification). This can occur in three different ways: classification (social actors are described in terms of major categories within society, such as class, race, religion, gender), relational identification (describes social actors in terms of their relations to others, such as mom, friend) or physical identification (describes social actors by physical characteristics).

### *Overdetermination*

Overdetermination reveals if social actors are mentioned as participating in more than one social practice, for instance if female terrorists are referred to not only by being active in terrorism, but also in their role as mother, wife, or other social practices they might be involved in.

#### *4.3.3: Legitimation*

As mentioned before, one of the aspects of discourse is describing or judging on what is allowed within society and what is not. During the construction of texts these kinds of legitimations of social actions get integrated in texts and try to explain why things are done in a particular way (Van Leeuwen, 2008). For this research, it will be interesting to explore how actions of female terrorists, or actions of national authorities to combat them are being legitimized, and if female terrorists get a special treatment in this. Based on the analytical tools provided by Van Leeuwen (2008), legitimation can occur in three different ways:

#### *Authorization*

Authorization describes how references are made to an authority of traditions, customs, laws or any other institutional authority. Authorization can be on the basis of personal authorization by experts or role models within society, while impersonal authorization is based on regulations, laws and customs. Authority of tradition happens not because of a specific law or rule, but because it has been done that way for a long time, and people want to continue these habits. Which relates to the last, authorization by conformity in which actions are authorized because everybody does it in this way. Because of these long-lasting traditions, customs and built-up respect for official regulations within society, authorization can be an important way of legitimizing social actions, because readers will mostly evaluate these sources as trustworthy, but it is also a way to maintain long-lasting habits and inequalities within society.

#### *Moral evaluation*

Another tool to recognize the legitimation of social actions is by moral evaluation, in which actions are legitimized by means of values. The easiest way to do this is to describe actions in terms such as 'good' and 'bad', but mostly moral evaluation is linked to more complex discourses in which actions are for instance portrayed as something occurring from a natural order, implying that these actions were naturally



bound to happen, or associating the social action to other activities that are connected to positive values. With this actions are legitimized not because it is the right thing to do, but because it is like another activity which is also perceived as positive (or negative in the case of negative comparisons). Moral evaluations are often well hidden within texts but can have a big influence on the meaning of an event.

### *Rationalization*

The last tool of authorization of social actions is rationalization in which actions are legitimized by referring to their goals, uses and effects within society. Rationalization often deals with describing what the purpose of a certain social action is and the usefulness of the action for society.

#### *4.3.4: Interdiscursive social analysis*

For the last step of the three-dimensional approach of Fairclough (1992a), an explanation for the connection between the discursive practices and the social practices will be sought by means of an interdiscursive social analysis which focusses on the context in which discursive practices take place, how discourse is established by social practices and also what effect discourse can have on those practices. For this the methods from Halliday and Hasan's work (1989) are used to place text in a social context on the base of three features: the field of discourse, the tenor of discourse and the mode of discourse. This three-dimensional view can explain why certain things are said and written at a particular moment in a particular way. This process consists of three steps: first describing the field of discourse which refers to what is happening; the kind of social action that is described in the text. Next, writing down the tenor of discourse which shows who is involved, their statuses and roles and the connection between the actors involved in the text. Last, describing the mode of discourse will reveal the function of the language that is being used in the text for the social action and what the actors are expecting from language in this particular situation (Halliday and Hasan 1989). All of this together can help find out not only how female terrorists are described, but also why they are described like this.

#### **4.4: Ethical concerns**

This research will not gather any personal information but uses freely accessible news articles as its content of analysis. Ethical issues are therefore mostly related to respecting the copyrights of the publishers that are used. The use of content without permission is not allowed, but news



platforms do approve of the use of content for non-commercial educational purposes. Moreover, the news articles that are selected for this study do involve real people: the women that are the subject of the articles and the journalists that have wrote the articles. Respecting and maintaining their dignity will be of high priority during the analysing process.

## 5: FINDINGS

An analytical framework, which can be found in appendix 8.1, is developed based on an extensive literature review, in order to a provide an answer to the proposed research questions. A small-scale case study is performed to test the functionality of the model for both specific and generic cases.

### 5.1: Linguistic definition and construction of female terrorists

#### *5.1.1: Gender as the foundation of exceptionality*

The first proposed research question that the model should help answer is in what way female terrorists are linguistically defined and constructed in alternative news media. With the help of the linguistic categories within the model, the case study showed that female terrorists are mostly defined in terms of their gender, while men are referred to in a generic way, just in terms of their function. The choice to only mention the gender when addressing women strengthens the dominant discourse that female terrorists are something special.

*“They might have even included a notorious female British jihadi, the so-called “white widow” Samantha Lewthwaite.” (Escobar, 2013)*

The above linguistic choice of a journalist in the specific case of Samantha Lewthwaite proofs this once again. The choice of the verbs ‘might have even included’ suggests that female terrorists are something rare, an exception to the normality. This is not only the case in specific cases, also in the general case of ISIS, men are referred to as just ‘terrorists’, while women are always referred to by their gender, so ‘female suicide bomber’ or ‘female jihadi’. In one of the alternative news media reports, the author even chose to address the women involved in ISIS as ‘female activists’ and a ‘challenge’ while the men involved in the same organization and the same event were referred to as ‘terrorists’ and a ‘threat’. The words ‘activist’ and ‘challenge’ have a completely different connotation than ‘terrorist’ and ‘threat, and put women in a different, and less violent, position than men. So, female terrorists are mostly defined in alternative news reports is an exception because of their gender.

### *5.1.2: Relation to others*

Another way female terrorists are defined and constructed in alternative news reports is in regard to their relationships to others. The case studies revealed that many alternative journalists address women in terms of their social role in relation to others, such as ‘bride’, ‘widow’, ‘mother’ or ‘daughter’. Especially in the case of Samantha Lewthwaite, journalists tend to emphasize the fact she was a widow as a defining aspect of her as a human being. By making the connection to these social roles, these women are automatically put in traditional, stereotypical, feminine and heterosexual positions which harms the acknowledgement of women as their own full human being but puts them instead in a dependent position. With the help of the discursive and social categories within the model, more in-depth conclusions can be found why female terrorists are defined and constructed in this way. The tenor of discourse for instance describes who is involved in the discourse and the statuses and relationships of the actors. The traditional view of women in a caring, family-focussed and less dominant position is still very dominant within current society. Therefore, it is one of the first things that still come to our minds when we think of women, their connection to being a wife, a mother. This deep-rooted concept is hard to change and could explain why many journalists, also within alternative news media, consciously or unconsciously still use this traditional view on women in their writing. Female terrorists are difficult to ‘fit in’ the standard picture, because their involvement in hard violent acts forms a huge contrast with the idea of the soft, caring family-oriented women, which can help explain why female terrorists are still seen as exceptional.

## **5.2: Gender stereotypes**

Second, the model should help answer the question: to what extent are gender stereotypes used to describe female terrorists in the reporting of alternative news media? As expected from the literature review, gender stereotypes are still very present in current (alternative) news reports.

### *5.2.1: Appearance*

One way to express gender stereotypes is by making references to specific characteristics or physical features that are commonly seen as ‘feminine’ to highlight the gender of the subjects within the article. For example, some journalists made explicit indications to specific clothing typical for (mostly) Islamic women by addressing female terrorists as ‘veiled’ women, or the ‘Burqa bombers’ in alternative news reports. This is an interesting finding, because it also shows a highly integrated intersectionality with the importance of not only gender, but also the religious background of the female terrorists of these case studies. The analytical framework

provides categories about the context in which articles are written and can help find explanations for this. For example, especially within American news media, the ‘war on terror’ frame that was imposed after the attacks of 9/11 is very dominant. The concept of a female terrorist does not completely fit with this dominant discourse on terrorism, but the increased threat of Muslim organizations such as ISIS does, which could explain why in mostly American news media the focus lays so much on the religious background of female terrorists, so that they fit in the existing frame on terrorism and the threat of ‘Muslim’ organizations is further strengthened.

### 5.2.2: *Motivations*

Another aspect of gender stereotypes can be found in the stereotypical views on the motivations of female terrorists to join a terrorist organization. One of the main gender stereotypes is that women are more emotional than men and are engaged in terrorism mainly because of personal and emotional reasons, instead of ideological reasons. Here, the results showed a difference in the representation of women within specific cases and generic cases. In the case of Samantha Lewthwaite, she was mentioned in alternative news reports almost always in combination with her husband and her nickname, ‘the white widow’, which was created and enforced by the mass media. Thereby, she was clearly positioned in a submissive position, whereby assumptions were made that her reason to join a terrorist organization was because of the loss of her husband, which are clear links to the mainstream ‘terrorist-for-the-sake-of-love’ and redemption frames. Within the general case of ISIS, a way more nuanced approach was used in alternative news media, in which more logical religious and ideological motivations predominated, instead of emotional personal reasons.

The discursive and social categories within the model can help find explanations for why gender stereotypes are still used within some alternative news media. The involvement of women in violent acts of terrorism does not fit the stereotypical idea on gender, in which men are often portrayed in more dominant and aggressive positions than women. This idea is reinforced constantly in the dominant discourse within our current society, and therefore very difficult to go against. Which is why some journalists, also within alternative news media, consciously or unconsciously still add stereotypical views on women to their writing. Linking women to personal issues of family and husbands is thereby easy, because it puts women in a more traditional position, focussed on the family life, and as emotional beings, which is what we are used to. The realization that women can also actually join in violent acts because of the

same reasons of men, purely for ‘colder’ religious or ideological reasons is conflicting with our ideas on gender, and therefore more difficult to use. One of the journalists helped explain this:

*“Violent women subvert entrenched notions of femininity which tell us women are gentle, nurturing and conformist. Violence by women tests the limits of these norms and is threatening because it reveals that cultural understandings of womanhood are constructed – in other words, these norms are not given or ‘natural’.”* (Seal 2015)

The stereotypical view of the caring and soft women is something that is ingrained in our thinking. Providing counter stereotypical views on gender in news reports is challenging, not only because requires an open mind and a new approach to writing about women, but also because it is confrontational to realize how these stereotypes are maintained by society and thereby to criticize our own way of thinking and working.

### **5.3: Difference with mainstream news media**

Last, an answer should be given to the question to what extent the reporting on female terrorists differs in alternative news media compared to mainstream news media. The categories on alternative media could help highlight differences within the journalistic approach of both types of news media.

#### *5.3.1: Presence*

First of all, mainstream media tend to give more attention to female terrorists in general in their reports than alternative media. It was hard to find coverage by alternative news media on events that were widely reported in mainstream news media. Looking into the descriptive categories of the news outlets, as well as the discursive and social categories can help explain why this is the case. For instance, for mainstream news media one of the main goals is to report as soon as possible on highly newsworthy events to inform the public and keep up with competition, and terrorist attacks are the textbook example of newsworthy events. For alternative media, the goal is mostly to serve some human, cultural or ethnic ends and therefore their focus could lay more on other types of topics or other types of reporting, such as more background stories that take up more time.

### 5.3.2: *Personal touch*

However, as predicted from the literature review, the coverage of mainstream news media differs in many aspects from the coverage of alternative news media. Most clear is the focus on personal details of the female terrorists involved in most of the mainstream news reports, even though these personal details were not necessary for understanding the situation. In alternative news media, in as well as the specific case of Samantha Lewthwaite as the general case on ISIS the focus lay mainly on the context of the conflict than on the details of the person in question, although in the case of Samantha Lewthwaite, some personal details were still shared. Some of the mainstream media tried to make their articles as personal, and thereby as sensational, as possible with headlines such as:

*“Female suicide bomber holding her baby is pictured moments before she blew the two of them up in Mosul in a bid to slaughter soldiers”* (Holmes 2017).

Personal aspects of the female terrorist’s lives are magnified to make them even more monstrous, while for men such personal details are not frequently mentioned.

### 5.3.3: *Critical approach*

The last aspect that stood out in alternative media was that a more critical approach towards current policies regarding terrorism was given, while for mainstream media, this was not present in the reports. For both the specific case of Samantha Lewthwaite as the generic case of ISIS, critical questions were asked about the current situation, nuances were being brought about the current ‘demonization of Muslims, and suggestions were made on foreign and national policies such as below.

*“A counter-narrative should be conveyed to those young Muslims who feel disassociated with British society.”* (Wali 2015).

Taking into account the descriptive categories within the model on both types of media, such as the ideology of the platform, and cultural, political and economic factors from the social and discursive categories as well on the journalistic categories for alternative media, helps to find possible explanations for these differences. A balanced number of different ideological perspectives was sought to include in the sample, so both right-wing, conservative media platforms as more liberal left-wing oriented platforms, but fact is that most alternative media

tend to have a left-wing liberal approach, which also shows in their reports, that tend to have a more inclusive approach towards different cultural groups. Also, the case studies showed that alternative media are indeed more focussed on journalistic values as responsibility and justice by asking critical questions and providing alternative views on topics.

## **6: CONCLUSION & PRELIMINARY RESEARCH STRUCTURE**

### **6.1: Conclusion - opportunities for future research**

The main purpose of this dissertation is to provide an overview of the current research on the representation on female terrorists, and all the processes that are involved in this, such as framing, stereotypes, discourse and social cognition and propose a clear analytical approach for future research. An extensive literature review revealed that there is still a gap in the existing research on the representation of female terrorists in alternative media. This provides a meaningful opportunity for this proposed research project, which will contribute to new insights on this topic. By bringing together all of the concepts discussed in the theoretical and methodological frameworks, one analytical framework is constructed that can be used for future research on the representation of female terrorists in alternative media.

A small-scaled case study was performed on the case of Samantha Lewthwaite and female terrorists involved in ISIS to test the model and proofed that the model works for the proposed research questions. The first results already showed interesting insights in the definition of female terrorists in alternative news media and the difference with mainstream media. The intersectionality of the concept ‘female terrorist’ became clear, and showed the complexity of the concept, and therefore the complexity of the reporting on it. The concept of female terrorists turns out not to be simply about gender, it automatically also involves concepts as religion, race, cultural values and educational level, which has not been captured yet in one single research tool.

Besides, the case studies showed clear differences between the reporting of alternative and mainstream news media. Especially the focus on personal details in mainstream media, and a more critical approach in alternative news media stood out. Specific categories that can be used to study alternative media reports are not very present yet in the current literature but a very useful. Because these categories can not only be used for alternative media, to check how alternative they actually are, it can also be used to see how alternative mainstream news media are, if they are already using some of the concepts that are considered as alternative. This also goes the other way, the mainstream news frames that have been found by previous researchers on female terrorists do not just have to be used to see how ‘mainstream’ mainstream

media actually are, they can also be used to see if alternative news media are still applying mainstream news frames in their reports.

Based on the outcomes, all of the mentioned concepts are taken into account to capture the complexity of the concept of female terrorists and alternative news media. The model is finalized and structured according to five main categories: descriptive categories, linguistic categories, discursive and social categories, mainstream news categories, and alternative news categories. The works of numerous authors on critical discourse analysis, alternative journalism and the frames used in mainstream news media served as the foundation for this model, together with the new insights gained from the case studies.

All in all, the proposed approach of critical discourse analysis in combination with the analytical model will help reveal the hidden cultural, social and political complexities behind the discourse regarding female terrorists in new forms of news media. A detailed overview of the next steps for this future research project can be found in appendix 8.4.

## **6.2: Limitations**

This study approaches gender and media research from the perspective of the Critical Theory. This means that the content will be studied in-depth, but also that the research can only cover a specific topic with a limited number of articles from a limited amount of news platforms. Therefore, conclusions cannot be used to completely understand the full scope of news reporting on female terrorists. Not to mention understanding the full scope of gender equality in society or the tactical considerations of terrorist organizations. There are many other influential factors in regard to these topics that are beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, comprehensive conclusions cannot yet be drawn just by this research in how to proceed towards a more sufficient representation of gender in the media.

Furthermore, due to the limited amount of time and space, not all concepts related to this topic could be included in this proposal. For the final research project, interesting and necessary aspects such as the visual representation of female terrorists in news articles should still be included, to further improve the completeness of the analytical framework and the outcomes of the research.

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## 8: APPENDIX

### 8.1: Analytical Framework

DESCRIPTIVE CATEGORIES - ARTICLE	
Title	
Publishing date	
Journalistic form	
Gender of reporter	
News platform	
Ideology of news platform	
Origin of news platform	
Media group	
DESCRIPTIVE CATEGORIES - SUBJECT	
Gender of subject	
Origin of subject	
Ideology of subject	
LINGUISTIC CATEGORIES	
Vocabulary	
Vocabulary	= predominating vocabulary, formal and technical (implying distant relationship to reader) or informal (implying closer relationship)
Emotional/Logical	= appealing to emotions or logical and argumentative
Ideology	= use of words which are ideologically significant (representing dominant ideology)
Identities	= use of verbs/nouns/adjectives that contribute to construct identities for the actors involved
Metaphors	= use of metaphors to explain concepts within the article
Synonyms/Antonyms	= choice of words and other possibilities to explain concepts within the article
Grammar	
Verb processes	= use of verb processes: verbs of action, verbs of feelings/thoughts, verbs of saying or verbs establishing relations/classifying entities
Active/passive writing	= active/passive voice
Gender	
Gender-specific words	= use of gender specific words when there are alternatives available, or when unnecessary for the understanding of the situation
Asymmetry	= presence of asymmetry in male/female relationships
Power	= promoting power-sharing between sexes
Sexism	= reinforcing traditional gender ideology/ traces of sexism
Stereotypes	= presence of stereotypical attitudes towards gender

<b>DISCURSIVE AND SOCIAL CATEGORIES</b>	
<b>Social Actor Analysis</b>	
Exclusion	= social actors that played a role in the situation but are left out (on purpose or by accident), and the possible intention for this
Role allocation	= the roles social actors get assigned within the situation in the report, who is assigned as "agent"/actor and who as "patient"/goal
Strong or weak	= the position the social actors get assigned within the situation in the report, is the actor represented in a strong position (in the lead, dominant, having control over a situation) or weak (dependent or victim of others, not in control of the situation)
Genericization and specification	= social actors are referred to in a generic or specific way
Individualization and assimilation	= social actors are addressed as individuals or as groups
Naming and reference	= the referential choices that are made to name actors
Functionalization and Identification	= social actors are referred to in terms of what they "do" or what they "are"
Classification	= social actors are referred to in terms of major (social) categories
Relational identification	= social actors are referred to in terms of their relations to others
Physical identification	= social actors are referred to in terms of their physical characteristics
Overdetermination	= social actors are referred to participating in more than one social practice
<b>Legitimation</b>	
Authorization	= the social action central in the article is legitimated by reference to the authority of tradition/law/custom/person (personal authority/impersonal authority)
Moral Evaluation	= the social action central in the article is legitimated by reference to moral values dominant in current society
Rationalization	= the social action central in the articles legitimated by reference to the goals, outcomes and uses of the social action
<b>Interdiscursive social analysis</b>	
Field of discourse	= describes what the discourse is about, what is happening, the nature of social action
Tenor of discourse	= describes who is involved in the discourse, nature of the actors and their statuses/roles/relationships as well as author/subject relationship
Mode of discourse	= describes how the action is told, what part is language playing, what are the actors expecting the language to do for them in a situation
Context of situation	= describes the context in which a social action is happening, the ideology of the news platform, the production process, leading up to the construction of discourse
Context of culture	= describes the context of culture, land of origin, political/economic/social influences of news platform/journalist/audience
<b>MAINSTREAM NEWS CATEGORIES ON FEMALE TERRORISTS</b>	
<b>Characteristics</b>	
Origin (hometown/country)	= reference is made to the origin of the female terrorist and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
Age	= reference is made to the age of the female terrorist and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
Religion	= reference is made to the religion that the female terrorist associates with and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
Terrorist group affiliation	= reference is made to the organization that the female terrorist associates with and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
Personal life - married	= reference is made to the marital status of the female terrorist and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)



Personal life - children	= reference is made to the parent ship of the female terrorist and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
Personal life - family	= reference is made to family members of the female terrorist and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
Intelligence/ educational level	= reference is made to the intelligence, capabilities or educational level of the female terrorist and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
Physical appearance	= reference is made to the physical appearance of the female terrorist and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
Clothing	= reference is made to the clothing of the female terrorist and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
Weapons	= reference is made to weapons the female terrorist is carrying and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
<b>Motivations</b>	
Desperation / Escape	= framed as female terrorist that joins (voluntary or forced) a terrorist organization because of poor living conditions or because she failed as a woman in building up a traditional family life, as an attempt to escape the situation or out of desperation
Family	= framed as female terrorist that joins (voluntary or forced) a terrorist organization because of family members that are involved in terrorism
Liberation / Feminist	= framed as female terrorist that joins a terrorist organization because of feminist reasons, as an act of liberation for women or as a step towards gender equality
Love	= framed as female terrorist that joins (voluntary or forced) a terrorist organization because of partner that is involved in terrorism
Nationalism	= framed as female terrorist that joins a terrorist organization because of nationalistic reasons, as an act against current leaders or policies
Religion	= framed as female terrorist that joins a terrorist organization because of religious reasons, as part of a holy mission or war
Revenge / Redemption	= framed as female terrorist that joins a terrorist organization because of personal loss or hurt, as an act of retribution
<b>Position</b>	
Position within the organization	= reference is made to the position of the female terrorist within the terrorist organization she affiliates with and the possible intention for this (is this mentioned for other actors as well?)
Disregarded	= the female terrorist is not mentioned at all as a perpetrator and is attention given to other (male) perpetrators
Overshadowed	= the female terrorist is mentioned as a perpetrator, but is more attention given to other (male) perpetrators
Female terrorist as exception	= the female terrorist's position in the organization is framed as something exceptional
Female terrorist as strategic choice/desire	= the female terrorist's position in the organization is framed as a strategic choice, a benefit for organizations
Female terrorist as victim	= the female terrorist's position in the organization is framed as something that she is forced into
Female terrorist as warrior	= the female terrorist's position within the organization is framed as brave, full of fighting spirit and as a full-fledged part in the "battlefield"
<b>ALTERNATIVE JOURNALISM CATEGORIES</b>	
<b>Ethical principles - Ethics of Active Listening</b>	
Principle of justice	
Supplementing or contradicting dominant discourses	= providing a more extensive or different explanation of a situation than used in mainstream discourse (by mass media)
Alternative vision to hegemonic policies/priorities/perspectives	= providing an alternative approach, solution of policy for a situation than that of the currently dominant approach, solution or policy
Support for underrepresented societal groups	= openly supporting or creating awareness for minorities within current society
Humanizing both sides of a conflict	= humanize all actors within a conflict, making sure it is not biased towards one of them
Giving a voice to the voiceless	= giving attention to minorities that are often overlooked in mass media and share their opinions/stories

Gender balance	= representation of balanced number of women/men within article
<b>Principle of responsibility</b>	
Self-representation	= allowing subjects to give a reaction or explain the situation from their perspective
Assertion of human/cultural/ethnic ends	= written to serve a certain goal within society
Acknowledgment of women as own human being	= representing women as their own person instead of in relation to someone else/men
Active listening	= underlining the importance of active participation by the public within a democracy, providing the opportunity to share thoughts about a subject
Critical attitude	= having a critical stance towards social injustices and expressing this openly
<b>Principle of truth</b>	
Expertise	= seek expertise of authorized and reliable sources, especially women/women organizations when authorization is applied to explain a situation regarding women
Representation of all parties involved	= providing nuances about a conflict, addressing both sides of a conflict in an equal way
Context	= providing relevant context to a situation such as a small summary of the background of the conflict instead of non-relevant or sensational aspects for instance of the personal background of the actor that does not contribute to the understanding of a situation

## 8.2: Description media outlets – case study

Alternative media	ALTERNET	DEMOCRACY NOW!	OPENDEMOCRACY	THE CONVERSATION
<i>Origin</i>	United States, created by the Institute for Alternative Journalism and Independent Media Institute	United States, founded by four journalists	United Kingdom, owned by openDemocracy Foundation for the Advancement of Global Education	launched in Australia, expanded to UK, US, Africa and France, Indonesia and Spain
<i>Format</i>	online news outlet	TV, radio, online news outlet	political website	online news organization
<i>Aim</i>	inspire their audience to take action on topics related to social justice, environment and human rights by providing them extensive news stories and background information and concrete actions steps towards change	bringing social injustices to the light and give activists a platform to inform and discuss	by providing an extensive analysis of social and political issues they encourage their audience and the political power for a democratic debate about current issues	providing the audience reliable information written by academics in order to maintain a healthy democratic society
<i>Online reach (monthly visitors)</i>	1,000,000	395,000	290,000	10,700,000
<i>Funding</i>	independent platform, funded through grants, subscriptions, ad revenues, donations	independent non-profit platform, funded by individual contributions	non-profit platform, funded by grants, reader donations and partnerships	charity funded by university members, grants by governments or corporate partners and reader donations
<i>Part of media group</i>	a program from the Independent Media Institute	no	no	part of network of non-profit media outlets

Mainstream media	BBCNEWS	CNN	DAILY EXPRESS	DAILY MAIL	THE GUARDIAN	THE NEW YORK TIMES	THE SUN
<i>Origin</i>	United Kingdom, national broadcaster	United States	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United States	United Kingdom
<i>Format</i>	TV, radio and online news outlet	TV network with online news platform	newspaper with online news platform	newspaper with online news platform	newspaper with online news platform	newspaper with online news platform	newspaper with online news platform
<i>Aim</i>	play a part in the public interest of all audiences worldwide and spreading the values of the United Kingdom by providing high-quality news services	bring the world to their audience, 24 hours a day, seven days a week by providing reliable and high-quality news reports to an international audience	inform and entertain their audience on the most important world events in an accurate, fair and vigorous way	constantly updated news reports to provide their audience with the latest updates on everything, from global politics to sports and human interest.	provide their audience high-impact journalism on politics, environment, science, social justice, sport and culture	bring its audience the latest news, investigations and opinions by their professional team of journalists to help them understand the world.	provide the audience with the latest breaking news on politics, crime, sports and celebrities across the United Kingdom
<i>Online reach (monthly visitors)</i>	179,000,000	166,000,000	27,000,000	33,000,000	23,400,000	70,000,000	29,000,000
<i>Funding</i>	national government, EU, UN, international organizations and corporate partners, private donations	funded by Warner Media, foremostly by advertising, sales and license fees	funded by Reach plc publishing house, by subscriptions, newsstand sales and advertising revenues	funded by foundations, subscriptions, newsstand sales and advertising revenues	funded by foundations, subscriptions, newsstand sales and advertising revenues	funded by subscriptions, newsstand sales and advertising revenues	funded by subscriptions, newsstand sales and advertising revenues
<i>Part of media group</i>	British Broadcasting Corporation	Warner Media	Reach plc	Daily Mail and General Trust, holding company DMG Media	The Guardian Media Group part of the Scott Trust Limited	The New York Times Company	News UK

### 8.3: Preliminary sample overview

SPECIFIC CASES	NEWS PLATFORM	ORIGIN	DATE	URL
<b>Samantha Lewthwaite</b>				
<i>Mainstream</i>				
Samantha Lewthwaite: Whereabouts of Kenya attack suspect a mystery	BBC	UK	03-02-14	<a href="https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-25990055">https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-25990055</a>
Was 'White Widow' Samantha Lewthwaite involved in Kenya mall attack?	CNN	US	24-09-13	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/2013/09/24/world/africa/kenya-white-widow/index.html">https://edition.cnn.com/2013/09/24/world/africa/kenya-white-widow/index.html</a>
On-the-run British terrorist Samantha Lewthwaite known as The White Widow 'is recruiting suicide bombers to attack Spanish beaches this summer'	Daily Mail	UK	04-10-13	<a href="https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5955915/The-White-Widow-recruiting-suicide-bombers-attack-Spanish-beaches-summer.html">https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5955915/The-White-Widow-recruiting-suicide-bombers-attack-Spanish-beaches-summer.html</a>
A shaken Kenya is hit again in 2 deadly attacks by militants	The New York Times	US	26-09-13	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/27/world/africa/2-more-militant-attacks-unsettle-kenya.html?searchResultPosition=2">https://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/27/world/africa/2-more-militant-attacks-unsettle-kenya.html?searchResultPosition=2</a>
BEACH TERROR THREAT White Widow Samantha Lewthwaite 'recruiting suicide bombers to attack British holiday hotspots in Spain, Greece and Turkey this summer'	The Sun	UK	15-07-18	<a href="https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/6782953/white-widow-samantha-lewthwaite-recruiting-suicide-bombers-to-attack-british-holiday-hotspots-in-spain-greece-and-turkey-this-summer/">https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/6782953/white-widow-samantha-lewthwaite-recruiting-suicide-bombers-to-attack-british-holiday-hotspots-in-spain-greece-and-turkey-this-summer/</a>
<i>Alternative</i>				
Why the 'Jihadi' Mall Attack in Kenya Is the Perfect Pretext for America to Spread Its Empire Deeper into Africa	Alternet	US	24-09-13	<a href="https://www.alternet.org/2013/09/why-iihadi-mall-attack-kenya-perfect-pretext-america-spread-its-empire-deeper-africa/">https://www.alternet.org/2013/09/why-iihadi-mall-attack-kenya-perfect-pretext-america-spread-its-empire-deeper-africa/</a>
Evil: what's in a word?	OpenDemocracy	UK	01-10-13	<a href="https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/evil-whats-in-word/">https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/evil-whats-in-word/</a>
'White Widow', 'Black Widow': why do female terrorists perplex us?	The Conversation	UK	26-09-13	<a href="https://theconversation.com/white-widow-black-widow-why-do-female-terrorists-perplex-us-18616">https://theconversation.com/white-widow-black-widow-why-do-female-terrorists-perplex-us-18616</a>
<b>Shamima Begum</b>				
<i>Mainstream</i>				
Shamima Begum: Justice and the ISIS bride	BBC	UK	23-11-20	<a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-55034542">https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-55034542</a>
Is Shamima Begum's new look a sham? ISIS bride has ditched the hijab for hair dye and watches GMB from her tent - but behind her makeover, troubling questions remain	Daily Mail	UK	19-03-21	<a href="https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9382079/Questions-remain-iihadi-bride-Shamima-Begum-despite-western-makeover.html">https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9382079/Questions-remain-iihadi-bride-Shamima-Begum-despite-western-makeover.html</a>
Shamima Begum: how the case developed	The Guardian	UK	16-07-20	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jul/16/shamima-begum-how-the-case-developed">https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jul/16/shamima-begum-how-the-case-developed</a>
It'll take a lot more than a makeover to prove Shamima Begum no longer supports ISIS'	The Mirror	UK	16-03-21	<a href="https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/itll-take-lot-more-makeover-23741685">https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/itll-take-lot-more-makeover-23741685</a>

<i>Alternative</i>				
Under the UK's Counter-Terrorism Strategy, Shamima Begum Was Never Presumed Innocent	Novara Media	UK	24-02-19	<a href="https://novaramedia.com/2019/02/24/under-the-uks-counter-terrorism-strategy-shamima-begum-was-never-presumed-innocent/">https://novaramedia.com/2019/02/24/under-the-uks-counter-terrorism-strategy-shamima-begum-was-never-presumed-innocent/</a>
We owe it to young people to let Shamima Begum return home	OpenDemocracy	UK	27-02-19	<a href="https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/we-owe-it-to-young-people-to-let-begum-return/">https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/we-owe-it-to-young-people-to-let-begum-return/</a>
Not a Jihadi Bride but a female member of ISIS	The Article	UK	22-07-20	<a href="https://www.thearticle.com/not-a-jihadi-bride-but-a-female-member-of-isis">https://www.thearticle.com/not-a-jihadi-bride-but-a-female-member-of-isis</a>
Shamima Begum: what the media's fixation on her 'western' clothing means for Muslim women	The Conversation	UK	07-04-21	<a href="https://theconversation.com/shamima-begum-what-the-medias-fixation-on-her-western-clothing-means-for-muslim-women-157281">https://theconversation.com/shamima-begum-what-the-medias-fixation-on-her-western-clothing-means-for-muslim-women-157281</a>
Brother-in-law of ISIS bride Shamima Begum has backed the government decision to strip her of her citizenship	The London Economic	UK	20-02-19	<a href="https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/news/brother-in-law-of-isis-bride-shamima-begum-has-backed-the-government-decision-to-strip-her-of-her-citizenship-120574/">https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/news/brother-in-law-of-isis-bride-shamima-begum-has-backed-the-government-decision-to-strip-her-of-her-citizenship-120574/</a>
Going Home, Making a teenage jihadi bride and her baby stateless diminishes us all	Tortoise Media	UK	24-02-19	<a href="https://www.tortoisemedia.com/2019/02/24/editors-notes-24-2/">https://www.tortoisemedia.com/2019/02/24/editors-notes-24-2/</a>
<b>Safaa Boular</b>				
<i>Mainstream</i>				
The radicalisation of Safaa Boular: A teenager's journey to terror	BBC	UK	04-06-18	<a href="https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-44359958">https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-44359958</a>
Teenager was urged to attack British museum by ISIS husband court told	The Guardian	UK	23-05-18	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/23/teenager-was-urged-to-attack-british-museum-by-isis-husband-court-told">https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/23/teenager-was-urged-to-attack-british-museum-by-isis-husband-court-told</a>
ISIS SISTERS, Teen girl 'plotted terror attack with mum and sister in all-female hit squad'	The Sun	UK	10-05-18	<a href="https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/6256112/safaa-boular-terror-attack-british-museum-mum-sister-london/">https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/6256112/safaa-boular-terror-attack-british-museum-mum-sister-london/</a>
UK's youngest ISIS female terrorist jailed for life	The Times of India	India	04-08-18	<a href="https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/uk/uks-youngest-isis-female-terrorist-plotter-jailed-for-life/articleshow/65271863.cms">https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/uk/uks-youngest-isis-female-terrorist-plotter-jailed-for-life/articleshow/65271863.cms</a>
<i>Alternative</i>				
Teenage girl found guilty plotting female UK terror attack	SheThePeople	India	05-06-18	<a href="https://www.shethepeople.tv/news/teenage-girl-found-guilty-plotting-female-uk-terror-attack/">https://www.shethepeople.tv/news/teenage-girl-found-guilty-plotting-female-uk-terror-attack/</a>
Teen Bride is youngest brit ever convicted for terror	The London Economic	UK	04-06-18	<a href="https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/news/teen-is-bride-is-youngest-brit-ever-convicted-of-terror-plot-90573/">https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/news/teen-is-bride-is-youngest-brit-ever-convicted-of-terror-plot-90573/</a>
<b>Leila Khaled</b>				
<i>Mainstream</i>				
San Francisco State University defends hosting talk by Palestinian militant Leila Khaled who hijacked a flight to New York City after the school promoted the event as 'an historic encounter with a feminist icon'	Daily Mail	UK	16-09-20	<a href="https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8740871/San-Francisco-State-University-defends-hosting-talk-militant-Leila-Khaled.html">https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8740871/San-Francisco-State-University-defends-hosting-talk-militant-Leila-Khaled.html</a>

Palestinian hijacker Leila Khaled to speak at San Francisco State University, Jewish groups condemn invitation	Fox News	US	09-09-20	<a href="https://www.foxnews.com/us/palestinian-hijacker-leila-khaled-to-speak-at-san-francisco-state-university-this-month">https://www.foxnews.com/us/palestinian-hijacker-leila-khaled-to-speak-at-san-francisco-state-university-this-month</a>
Hijacked Honour Leila Khaled doesn't deserve SFSU's respect	The NY Post	US	12-09-20	(article no longer published online, pdf copy of article available)
Palestinian terrorist hijacker Leila Khaled set to speak at California even	The Times of Israel	Israel	10-09-20	<a href="https://www.timesofisrael.com/search/?q=leila+khaled&amp;submit=search">https://www.timesofisrael.com/search/?q=leila+khaled&amp;submit=search</a>
<i>Alternative</i>				
From Palestine to China, Zoom has no business censoring dissent	972mag	Israel	26-10-20	<a href="https://www.972mag.com/zoom-censorship-dissent/">https://www.972mag.com/zoom-censorship-dissent/</a>
Zoom, Facebook and YouTube Censor SFSU Seminar Attended by Palestinian Activist	Democracy Now!	US	24-09-20	<a href="https://www.DemocracyNow!.org/2020/9/24/headlines/zoom_facebook_and_youtube_censor_sfsu_seminar_attended_by_palestinian_activist">https://www.DemocracyNow!.org/2020/9/24/headlines/zoom_facebook_and_youtube_censor_sfsu_seminar_attended_by_palestinian_activist</a>
<b>GENERIC CASES</b>				
<b>NEWS PLATFORM ORIGIN DATE URL</b>				
<b>Female terrorists - Middle East (IS/Taliban/AI Qaeda)</b>				
<i>Mainstream</i>				
Female suicide bombers 'blow themselves up' in Syria's Baghuz	BBC	UK	15-09-19	(article no longer published online, pdf copy of article available)
Pakistan official: Female suicide bomber was behind deadly blast	CNN	US	26-12-10	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/asiapcf/12/26/pakistan.blast/index.html">https://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/asiapcf/12/26/pakistan.blast/index.html</a>
ISIS women pose growing challenge to Europe	CNN	US	14-09-16	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/2016/09/13/opinions/ISIS-women-planning-europe-attacks-ghitis/index.html">https://edition.cnn.com/2016/09/13/opinions/ISIS-women-planning-europe-attacks-ghitis/index.html</a>
Why women are a not-so-secret weapon for ISIS	CNN	US	31-03-17	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/2017/03/31/opinions/female-fighters-ISIS-behind-the-mask-omar-opinion/index.html">https://edition.cnn.com/2017/03/31/opinions/female-fighters-ISIS-behind-the-mask-omar-opinion/index.html</a>
ISIS recruiters are preying on vulnerable domestic workers in Hong Kong and Singapore	CNN	US	11-09-19	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/2019/11/09/asia/indonesia-singapore-domestic-worker-ISIS-intl-hnk/index.html">https://edition.cnn.com/2019/11/09/asia/indonesia-singapore-domestic-worker-ISIS-intl-hnk/index.html</a>
Europe's new breed of terrorist – WOMEN: Female attacker likely as police 'ignore' them	Daily Express	UK	31-08-16	<a href="https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/705741/Female-terrorism-terror-Islamic-State-women-attacker-police-UK">https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/705741/Female-terrorism-terror-Islamic-State-women-attacker-police-UK</a>
ISIS Female terrorist phenomenon IS REAL and plotting attacks IN EUROPE, says expert	Daily Express	UK	12-09-16	<a href="https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/709799/ISIS-Islamic-State-Female-terrorist-phenomenon-REAL-attacks-EUROPE-expert">https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/709799/ISIS-Islamic-State-Female-terrorist-phenomenon-REAL-attacks-EUROPE-expert</a>
At least 37 people are killed as three ISIS jihadis including a female suicide bomber launch co-ordinated attacks on a Shia Muslim shrine north of Baghdad	Daily Mail	UK	07-06-16	<a href="https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3680041/At-20-people-dead-car-bomb-tears-mausoleum-north-Baghdad.html">https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3680041/At-20-people-dead-car-bomb-tears-mausoleum-north-Baghdad.html</a>
Seconds from detonation: Female suicide bomber holding her BABY is pictured moments before she blew the two of them up in Mosul in a bid to slaughter soldiers	Daily Mail	UK	08-07-17	<a href="https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4677970/photo-Mosul-woman-holding-child-detonate-bomb.html">https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4677970/photo-Mosul-woman-holding-child-detonate-bomb.html</a>
At least nine people are killed and 30 injured after female suicide bomber wearing a burka blows herself up outside hospital in Pakistan	Daily Mail	UK	21-09-19	<a href="https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7269413/Female-suicide-bomber-kills-eight-northwest-Pakistan.html">https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7269413/Female-suicide-bomber-kills-eight-northwest-Pakistan.html</a>

The British women married to jihad	The Guardian	UK	06-09-14	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/06/british-women-married-to-jihad-isis-syria">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/06/british-women-married-to-jihad-isis-syria</a>
Schoolgirl jihadis: the female Islamists leaving home to join ISIS fighters	The Guardian	UK	29-09-14	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/29/schoolgirl-jihadis-female-islamists-leaving-home-join-isis-iraq-syria">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/29/schoolgirl-jihadis-female-islamists-leaving-home-join-isis-iraq-syria</a>
The secret world of ISIS brides: 'U dnt hav 2 pay 4 ANYTHING if u r wife of a martyr'	The Guardian	UK	24-06-15	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/24/isis-brides-secret-world-jihad-western-women-syria">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/24/isis-brides-secret-world-jihad-western-women-syria</a>
<i>Alternative</i>				
Iraqi bombing kills 41	Democracy Now!	US	02-02-10	<a href="https://www.DemocracyNow!.org/2010/2/1/headlines/iraqi_bombing_kills_41_shiite_pilgrims">https://www.DemocracyNow!.org/2010/2/1/headlines/iraqi_bombing_kills_41_shiite_pilgrims</a>
Female suicide bombers in Pakistan, what's in it for them?	OpenDemocracy	UK	04-10-11	<a href="https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/female-suicide-bombings-in-pakistan-whats-in-it-for-women/">https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/female-suicide-bombings-in-pakistan-whats-in-it-for-women/</a>
Why do women in West turn to Islamic State? For the same reasons as men	The Conversation	UK	05-02-15	<a href="https://theconversation.com/why-do-women-in-west-turn-to-islamic-state-for-the-same-reasons-as-men-36851">https://theconversation.com/why-do-women-in-west-turn-to-islamic-state-for-the-same-reasons-as-men-36851</a>
How narratives around violent women warp our view of female jihadis	The Conversation	UK	15-09-15	<a href="https://theconversation.com/how-narratives-around-violent-women-warp-our-view-of-female-jihadis-45917">https://theconversation.com/how-narratives-around-violent-women-warp-our-view-of-female-jihadis-45917</a>
<b>Female terrorists - Palestine/Israel</b>				
<i>Mainstream</i>				
Israel-Palestinian violence: Knife attackers shot dead	BBC	UK	17-05-15	<a href="https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34559234">https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34559234</a>
Palestinian girls become terrorists so they could meet good-looking guys	The Jerusalem Post	Israel	21-04-16	<a href="https://www.ipost.com/arab-israeli-conflict/palestinian-girls-become-terrorists-so-they-could-meet-good-looking-guys-451966">https://www.ipost.com/arab-israeli-conflict/palestinian-girls-become-terrorists-so-they-could-meet-good-looking-guys-451966</a>
Women and Jihad: The motivation of female suicide bombers	The Jerusalem Post	Israel	06-02-17	<a href="https://www.ipost.com/arab-israeli-conflict/women-and-jihad-the-motivation-of-female-suicide-bombers-480666">https://www.ipost.com/arab-israeli-conflict/women-and-jihad-the-motivation-of-female-suicide-bombers-480666</a>
Palestinian teen girls play bigger role in terror attacks; What once was rare, for women, assaults on Israelis can be escape, a statement	USA Today	US	27-11-15	<a href="https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2015/11/25/why-palestinians-attacking-israelis-include-teen-girls/76331152/">https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2015/11/25/why-palestinians-attacking-israelis-include-teen-girls/76331152/</a>
<i>Alternative</i>				
Do You Think Palestine Has the Right to Exist?	AlterNet	US	18-05-16	<a href="https://www.alternet.org/2016/05/do-you-think-palestine-has-right-exist/">https://www.alternet.org/2016/05/do-you-think-palestine-has-right-exist/</a>
BDS: Breaking New Barriers	Dissident Voice	US	28-04-11	<a href="https://dissidentvoice.org/2011/04/bds-breaking-new-barriers/">https://dissidentvoice.org/2011/04/bds-breaking-new-barriers/</a>
Finding direction	Israel 21c	Israel	08-02-04	<a href="https://www.israel21c.org/finding-direction/">https://www.israel21c.org/finding-direction/</a>
The suicide-bomber's mission	OpenDemocracy	UK	13-05-05	<a href="https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/war_weapon_2599jsp/">https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/war_weapon_2599jsp/</a>
Role of Palestinian women in resistance	OpenDemocracy	UK	17-04-14	<a href="https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/role-of-palestinian-women-in-resistance/">https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/role-of-palestinian-women-in-resistance/</a>

<b>Female terrorists - Africa (Al-Shabab/Boko Haram)</b>				
<i>Mainstream</i>				
Military Uncovers More Female Members of Boko Haram	AllAfrica	Multiple	07-07-14	(article no longer published online, pdf copy of article available)
The Emergence of Female Suicide Bombers	AllAfrica	Multiple	04-08-14	(article no longer published online, pdf copy of article available)
Boko Haram crisis: Nigeria's female bombers strike	BBC	UK	06-08-14	<a href="https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-28657085">https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-28657085</a>
Made-up to look beautiful. Sent out to die.	BBC	UK	-	<a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/made-up-to-look-beautiful-sent-out-to-die">https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/made-up-to-look-beautiful-sent-out-to-die</a>
Nigerian security agents arrest suspected female suicide bomber	BBC	UK	05-12-14	(article no longer published online, pdf copy of article available)
Boko Haram favours women, children as suicide bombers, study reveals	CNN	US	11-08-17	<a href="https://edition.cnn.com/2017/08/10/africa/boko-haram-women-children-suicide-bombers/index.html">https://edition.cnn.com/2017/08/10/africa/boko-haram-women-children-suicide-bombers/index.html</a>
Nigerian troops arrest three female Boko Haram members	PM News	Nigeria	04-07-14	(article no longer published online, pdf copy of article available)
Nigerian military arrests three female Boko Haram recruiters – DHQ	Premium Times	Nigeria	04-07-14	<a href="https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/164389-nigerian-military-arrests-three-female-boko-haram-recruiters-dhq.html">https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/164389-nigerian-military-arrests-three-female-boko-haram-recruiters-dhq.html</a>
Why Boko Haram uses female suicide-bombers	The Economist	UK	23-10-17	<a href="https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2017/10/23/why-boko-haram-uses-female-suicide-bombers">https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2017/10/23/why-boko-haram-uses-female-suicide-bombers</a>
NATO: women are being drawn into terrorism in return for food and water	The Guardian	UK	15-06-18	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/public-leaders-network/2018/jun/15/nato-terrorist-groups-women-food-water">https://www.theguardian.com/public-leaders-network/2018/jun/15/nato-terrorist-groups-women-food-water</a>
Boko Haram turns female captives into terrorists	The New York Times	US	08-04-16	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/08/world/africa/boko-haram-suicide-bombers.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/08/world/africa/boko-haram-suicide-bombers.html</a>
They Ordered Her to Be a Suicide Bomber. She Had Another Idea.	The New York Times	US	13-03-20	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/13/world/africa/Nigeria-Boko-Haram-bomber.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/13/world/africa/Nigeria-Boko-Haram-bomber.html</a>
<i>Alternative</i>				
Listening to the stories of Boko Haram's wives	OpenDemocracy	UK	17-07-19	<a href="https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/listening-to-the-stories-of-boko-harams-wives/">https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/listening-to-the-stories-of-boko-harams-wives/</a>
Boko Haram deploys lots of women suicide bombers. I found out why	The Conversation	UK	13-06-19	<a href="https://theconversation.com/boko-haram-deploys-lots-of-women-suicide-bombers-i-found-out-why-118535">https://theconversation.com/boko-haram-deploys-lots-of-women-suicide-bombers-i-found-out-why-118535</a>
Why we did it: the Kenyan women and girls who joined Al-Shabaab	The Conversation	UK	21-02-21	<a href="https://theconversation.com/why-we-did-it-the-kenyan-women-and-girls-who-joined-al-shabaab-151592">https://theconversation.com/why-we-did-it-the-kenyan-women-and-girls-who-joined-al-shabaab-151592</a>
<b>Female terrorists - Asia (JAB Indonesia)</b>				
<i>Mainstream</i>				



Why are more Indonesian women getting involved in bomb attacks?	Al-Jazeera	Qatar	25-05-21	<a href="https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/25/why-are-more-women-leading-bomb-attacks-in-indonesia">https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/25/why-are-more-women-leading-bomb-attacks-in-indonesia</a>
Indonesia police arrest 14 members of group loyal to Islamic State	BBC	UK	20-12-16	(article no longer published online, pdf copy of article available)
Surabaya attacks: Family of five bomb Indonesia police headquarters	BBC	UK	14-05-18	<a href="https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-44105279">https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-44105279</a>
Gendering terrorism in Indonesia	The Jakarta Post	Indonesia	30-12-16	<a href="https://www.thejakartapost.com/academia/2016/12/30/gendering-terrorism-in-indonesia">https://www.thejakartapost.com/academia/2016/12/30/gendering-terrorism-in-indonesia</a>
Medan bomber pledged loyalty to new IS leader before attack	The Jakarta Post	Indonesia	15-11-19	<a href="https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/11/14/medan-suicide-bomber-pledged-allegiance-to-new-is-leader-before-attack-think-tank.html">https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/11/14/medan-suicide-bomber-pledged-allegiance-to-new-is-leader-before-attack-think-tank.html</a>
<i>Alternative</i>				
When parents take their children to die in jihadist suicide bombings, what can be done	The Conversation	UK	15-05-18	<a href="https://theconversation.com/when-parents-take-their-children-to-die-in-ijihadist-suicide-bombings-what-can-be-done-96512">https://theconversation.com/when-parents-take-their-children-to-die-in-ijihadist-suicide-bombings-what-can-be-done-96512</a>
Female suicide bombers: how terrorist propaganda radicalises Indonesian women	The Conversation	UK	28-06-18	<a href="https://theconversation.com/female-suicide-bombers-how-terrorist-propaganda-radicalises-indonesian-women-98143">https://theconversation.com/female-suicide-bombers-how-terrorist-propaganda-radicalises-indonesian-women-98143</a>

### 8.4: Research Timeline

	YEAR 1												YEAR 2											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>PHASE 1: PREPARATION</b>																								
Finalizing literature and theoretical part																								
Finalizing analytical approach																								
Finalizing sampling strategy																								
Collect sample																								
<b>PHASE 2: ANALYSIS</b>																								
Critical discourse analysis - part 1																								
First results - reflect approach, expand scope																								
Critical discourse analysis - part 2																								
First results																								
<b>PHASE 3: CONCLUSION AND REVISION</b>																								
Finalizing results																								
Conclusion																								
Revision																								
Submission																								