Persuasion Strategies in Terrorist Recruitment: The Case of ISIS

MA Thesis

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# Table of Contents

## Table of Contents

List of Tables, Abbreviations, and Glossary

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tables</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Overview | 5 |
1.2 Theoretical Background | 6 |
1.3 Research Gaps | 7 |
1.4 Research Questions | 8 |
1.5 Thesis Overview | 9 |

## 2. Literature Review

Linguistic Review | 10 |
2.1 Persuasion Theory | 10 |
2.2 Rhetoric | 12 |
  2.2.1 Appeals to Pathos | 12 |
  2.2.2 Appeals to Ethos | 13 |
  2.2.3 Rhetorical Devices | 14 |
2.3 Heuristic Processing | 15 |
Psychology Review | 17 |
2.4 The Archetypal Hero | 17 |
  2.4.1 Coming of Age | 19 |
  2.4.2 Masculinity | 21 |
2.5 Research Questions and Hypotheses | 24 |

## 3. ISIS

Introduction | 26 |
3.1 Inception and Brief History | 26 |
3.2 Al-Hayat Media Center | 28 |
3.3 Recent Developments in Recruitment | 29 |

## 4. Methodology

Introduction | 31 |
4.1 Material | 31 |
  3.1.1 *Flames of War* | 31 |
  3.1.2 *There is No Life Without Jihad* | 32 |
3.2 Procedure | 32 |
  3.2.1 Preliminary Research | 32 |
  3.2.2 Data Collection | 33 |
  3.2.3 Linguistic and Psychological Analysis | 33 |

## 5. Results and Analysis

Introduction | 34 |
5.1 Appeals to Pathos and Ethos | 34 |
5.2 Rhetorical Devices | 37 |
5.3 Heuristic Processing Cues 41

6. Discussion and Conclusion 44
   Introduction 44
   6.1 Discussion 44
      6.1.1 Coming of Age 44
      6.1.2 Masculinity 46
      6.1.3 Effectiveness of Persuasive Tactics 48
   6.2 Shortcomings 49
   6.3 Conclusion 50
   6.4 Suggestions for Further Research 50

Bibliography 52
List of Tables and Abbreviations

Tables
Table 1. Appeals to Pathos in *Flames of War* 34
Table 2. Appeals to Pathos in *There is No Life Without Jihad* 35
Table 3. Appeals to Ethos in *Flames of War* 36
Table 4. Rhetorical Devices in *Flames of War* 37
Table 5. Rhetorical Devices in *There is No Life Without Jihad* 40

Abbreviations
AQI  al-Qaeda in Iraq (former name of ISIS)
*FoW*  *Flames of War*
ISI  Islamic State of Iraq
ISIL  Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS  The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JTJ  Jam’at al-Tawhid wa’al-Jihad (former name of ISIS)
*TNLWJ*  *There is No Life Without Jihad*

Glossary
Da’wah: “Inviting others to Islam. Missionary work” (Da’wah n.d.)
Imām: “head of the Muslim community…synonymous with khalīfah” (Imam n.d.)
Jihād: “struggle”, or “battle” (Jihad n.d.)
Kāfir: “a disbeliever in God” (Kafir n.d.)
Khalīfah: “successor”, ruler of the Caliphate (Caliph n.d.)
Khilāfa: “The caliphate or khalifate, governance by means of a khalif” (Khilafa n.d.)
Kuffār: plural form of “kāfir”
Mujāhid singular form of “mujāhidūn” (Mujahideen n.d.)
Mujāhidūn: “those engaged in jihad” (Mujahideen n.d.)
Qu’ran: “the sacred scripture of Islam” (Quran n.d.)
Tabarakāta ta’ala: based on a combination of the formulaic expressions Tabarakallah, meaning “Blessed is Allah”, and Ta’ala, meaning “Exalted is He” (Tabarakallah n.d. & Ta’ala n.d.)
Tawḥīd: “asserting oneness [with God]” (Tawhid n.d.)
Sallallahu-alaihi wasallamethos: based on the formulaic expression Sallahu alayhi wa sallam, meaning “May Allah bless him and grant him peace” (Sallahu alayhi wa sallam n.d.)
Shahīd: “equivalent to and in a sense derivative of the Judaeo-Christian concept of martyr” (Shahid n.d.)
Sharī’ah: “Islamic law…the expression of Allah’s command for Muslim society and, in application, constitutes a system of duties that re incumbent upon a Muslim by virtue of his religious belief” (Shariah n.d.)
Ummah: “community…used in reference to the community of Believers or Muslims” (Ummah n.d.)
1. Introduction

1.1 Overview
The Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (henceforth ISIS), also commonly known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (or ISIL), has become a global threat in the last decade. The rise of asymmetrical warfare that Western powers and anti-ISIS governments are finding themselves having to engage in has created an entirely new stage upon which battles can play out. The Internet’s ability to spread information at the click of the button has given rise to digital terrorism and has created a much more prominent online threat from terrorist organizations. ISIS has appeared to embrace this new digital trend and is not only using it to spread its fundamentalist ideologies to all corners of the globe, but also to bait and recruit young men and women from predominantly non-Islamic countries. In order to counteract this surge in interest, governments would have to first understand the psychological appeal of ISIS and the methods and persuasive tactics they implement.

This thesis explores the ways in which video propaganda persuades young men living in western countries, to leave their homes and travel to the Middle East to become mujāhidūn in the name of ISIS. Additionally, this thesis discusses the psychological, sociological, and linguistic manipulation evidenced in ISIS propaganda videos that is leading to the mass exodus of young Western out of their home countries into Iraq and Syria.

This thesis is organized into six chapters. The first chapter contains information about the thesis at large and its structure and individual chapters. It also identifies the theoretical catalysts responsible for the inception of this thesis, and the research gaps it will attempt to fill. The chapter will conclude with a number of research questions raised with the aid of information found in the theoretical background and the identified research gaps. The second chapter concerns the reviewed literature, beginning with persuasion theory, in which specific theories on persuasive tactics are discussed in depth. Following the discussion on persuasion theory, a section containing the mythological conceptions of the archetypal hero, coming of age, and masculinity will be discussed at length. The third chapter contains information about ISIS, namely its inception, followed by a brief history, then a discussion of ISIS’ media wing Al-Hayat media, and concluding with recent recruitment developments. The fourth chapter describes the methodology, which
video materials were used and how they were studied. The fifth chapter analyzes the results of the video study and compares and contrasts its findings with the reviewed literature. Lastly, the sixth chapter contains a discussion of the research questions and hypotheses, ending with a conclusion and implications for further research.

1.2 Theoretical Background
There have been several inspirations behind the inception of this research. The first, though non-theoretical in nature, is a product of living in the digital age. The constant exposure to ISIS’ presence on the Internet, the news, and the television formed the basis for what would become this paper’s research topic. Ed Husain’s (2007) The Islamist, detailing his time as a young British Islamist, was also a catalyst behind the inception of this study.

Joseph Campbell’s (1991) claim that mythology is universally present in the development of the human race up to and including modern times was one of the first inspirations behind this research. His focus on the recurring mythological patterns that appear across and appeal to all cultures was the catalyst that convinced me to apply the psychological and sociological aspects of the mythological hero’s journey to this research on ISIS propaganda, under which coming of age are discussed.

Robert Johnson’s (1989) work on masculine psychology is closely tied to Campbell’s mythological conceptions, and provided a complementary view on the psychological framework of the archetypal hero. His work on the specific breakdown and analysis of the mythological story of Parsifal and the Grail Castle in regards to male masculinity greatly inspired the psychological aspect of this research.

Robert Cockcroft and Susan Cockcroft (2014), Alan Gross and Arthur Walzer (2008), and Michael Hyde (2004), all following Aristotle, were the catalysts in the inclusion of appeals to pathos and ethos. Their insight into the psychological and linguistic functions of appeals to pathos and ethos were integral in analyzing the video material this study focused on. The persuasive function of rhetorical devices was also an inspiration for the video analyses of this study.

Shelley Chaiken’s (1987) work on heuristic processing was the catalyst behind studying the heuristic processing cues inherent in ISIS propaganda videos. Chaiken claims that low involvement leads to the implementation of processing strategies governed by non-complex rules that require fewer logical arguments to
achieve persuasion. Chaiken’s (1980) work on heuristic versus systematic processing provided additional empirical evidence.

All three persuasion methods provided the inspiration for analyzing how ISIS manages to appeal to certain psychological aspects of young men living in the west, and how the manipulation of these psychological aspects can ultimately lead to the decision to join ISIS.

Carrying out research on ISIS propaganda required an extensive review of all the linguistic and psychological frameworks and theories previously discussed. Chapter 2 discusses persuasion theory, rhetoric (specifically rhetorical devices and appeals to *pathos* and *ethos*), and heuristic processing. Following the linguistic review, chapter 2 goes on to discuss the archetypal hero, coming of age, and masculinity.

### 1.3 Research Gaps

One of the main reasons I chose this topic is because there currently exists little to no academic research on the topic of ISIS propaganda videos. There are two likely reasons for this. The first is that, regardless of the fact that ISIS has existed for more than 20 years, the civilian population of the western world has only been confronted with knowledge of this terrorist group in recent years. The second reason is that ISIS has ushered in a new age of digital terrorism, and many are just now realizing what an impact it is currently having, and will be having, historically.

No extensive research has been conducted on ISIS propaganda videos, to the best of my knowledge, especially with a focus on the marriage of linguistic and psychological trends and how this influences individuals and/or groups being targeted by the propaganda. Therefore, it is highly relevant to not only explore this very novel issue from a linguistic, communicative point of view, but from a sociological and psychological perspective.

David Skillicorn (2015) of Queen’s University has conducted an empirical assessment of propaganda, focusing on Al Qaeda, ISIS, and the Taliban. Skillicorn (2015) conducted research on three magazines made by each terrorist organization in order to measure the level of propaganda intensity and found that ISIS ranked the highest out of the three. He also proposed a combined model of propaganda, in which imaginative language, deception, and gamification of language were usual, and informative language and complexity were unusual (Skillicorn 2015). Though some
of Skillicorn’s findings are relevant to this paper, he mainly targeted the intensity of propaganda and attempted to measure it amongst competing organizations, whereas this paper hopes to explain how and why ISIS propaganda is so effective.

Author and former US Special Operations Command advisor, James P. Farwell (2014) explored ISIS’ power on the digital stage. He claimed that the group’s appeal was as a fearsome warrior clan on a crusade against the west, a persona that quickly caught the attention of social media and spread like wildfire. Farwell (2014) claims that the only way to defeat ISIS is through systematic discretization and the destruction of this warrior persona they have built up around themselves. While this is also a very interesting point, and completely relevant to my research, Farwell overlooks the complexity of this warrior persona and does not delve deeper into how it was communicated and why it stuck with its audience, two points this thesis explores in detail.

Noriyuki Katagiri (2014) of the Department of International Security Studies, Air War College, has documented the threat of ISIS, including its well-known propaganda machine. Katagiri (2014) claims that this new wave of psychological and informational warfare has boosted ISIS’ popularity and will continue to be the thorn in the side of western powers seeking to oust them from both the Middle East and the world at large. Katagiri (2014) concludes, however, that the power still lies with the western nations and not insurgent groups, though the former must be very careful that the balance does not tip out of their favor. Katagiri (2014) provides suggestions for the United States government, offering a deeper look at ISIS propaganda on both a communicative and psychological level, and suggesting ideas on how to counter and combat it.

1.4 Research Questions
The research gaps have lead to the inception of the following research questions:

1. How do the videos appeal to the coming of age of potential new recruits in the west?
2. How do the videos appeal to the masculinity of potential new recruits in the west?
3. How effective is the implementation of rhetorical devices, heuristic processing cues, and the appeals to pathos and ethos?
1.5 Thesis Overview

This thesis contains six chapters. Chapter 2 consists of a literature review that is concluded with a reiteration of the research questions and their subsequent hypotheses. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology. Chapter 4 provides the results and analysis of this study. Lastly, chapter 5 contains a detailed discussion and conclusion.
2. Literature Review

Linguistic Review
In the linguistic section of this chapter, the relevant literature is reviewed. Section 2.1 details general persuasion theory. In section 2.2, rhetoric is discussed, including the appeals to *pathos* and *ethos* and rhetorical devices. Heuristic processing is laid out in section 2.3, concluding the linguistic review of this chapter.

2.1 Persuasion Theory
According to Daniel J. O'Keefe, Professor of Communication Studies at Northwestern University, “systematic thinking about persuasion dates at least as far back as the fifth century B.C.E., to Greek scholars such as Protagoras, Gorgias, Plato, Isocrates, and (especially) Aristotle” (2004: 31). The twenty-first century has proved to be no different, with persuasion playing an incredibly large role in the daily life and affairs of everyone across the planet. From education, to business, to communication, to warfare, persuasion is everywhere, for better or for worse (2004: 31).

O’Keefe identifies the most fundamental function of persuasion: attitude change. “Changing persons’ mental states, usually as precursors to behavioral change” is the most immediate goal behind engaging in any sort of persuasion (2004: 32). The chief concerns of attitude change are valence and extremity, with the former concerning the positive or negative attractiveness of an argument, and the latter being a measurement of how personally involved an individual is with an argument (O’Keefe 2004: 32). However, along with the further development of persuasion research has come a broadening of this conceptual horizon.

Additional Attitude Properties
In addition to the general (and original) focus on attitude change, other additional properties have been identified. Grouped together under the umbrella term “attitude strength” (O’Keefe 2004: 32), several factors come together to form a cohesive, logical whole. This so-called “attitude strength” is made up of “persistence (stronger attitudes are more persistent than are weaker ones), resistance (stronger attitudes are more resistant to change than are weaker ones), impact on information processing and judgments (stronger attitudes are more likely to affect such processes than are weaker
attitudes), and impact on behavior (stronger attitudes will have more effect on behavior than will weaker ones)” (O’Keefe 2004: 32).

Therefore, regardless of whether or not two individuals, or a group of individuals, have the same opinion about something, it is highly likely that the strength of their attitudes is not on the same level. It is highly likely, therefore, that persuaders will focus on individuals with weaker attitude strengths, in addition to valence and extremity (O’Keefe 2004: 32).

Mental States: Normative Considerations and Self-Efficacy
Aside from attitude, mental states have been identified as persuasion hotspots. One of these is normative considerations, in which “descriptive norms” often incorrectly influence an individual to do or not do something based on what the individual thinks everyone else is doing (O’Keefe 2004: 33). This can naturally lead to a situation where individuals find themselves doing something they would not normally do, or would otherwise be considered out of character, solely due to misconceptions of “normal behavior”. Persuaders, thus, will focus on counteracting these misconceptions of the “descriptive norms” in order to convince individuals of the merits of engaging in a certain type of behavior.

Another normative consideration is the “subjective norm”, in which individuals are more receptive to the opinions of important people in their lives (O’Keefe 2004: 32). If a mother, for example, tells her son or daughter to cease a certain behavior, it is theorized that this will be more effective than the son or daughter being told to stop or change their behavior from a stranger. This, of course, is not always the case, and could even have an opposite effect in some situations. In general, however, persuaders will seek to manipulate or influence the conception individuals have of what their family, friends, or loved ones will have in regards to a certain type of behavior or action.

Self-efficacy, in essence, is a mental block created and monitored by individuals within their own minds, and is often not related to an individual’s enthusiasm or positivity about any given activity; one can see a certain activity in a positive light yet never attempt to perform a similar activity due to individual mental constraints (O’Keefe 2004: 33). Though the idea of self-efficacy is not a new concept, the ways in which persuaders can address change in such mental blocks are recently
being addressed, with modeling and rehearsal appearing to be two most influential strategies to date (O’Keefe 2004: 33).

2.2 Rhetoric
In both written and spoken language, there is always a potential for manipulation and deceptive communication. Cockcroft and Cockcroft point out that “historically, rhetoric has not always been linked with an earnest concern for objective truth” (2014: 3). Indeed, Plato branded rhetorical skill as a “‘knack’”, without any concrete comprehension of the discussion at hand (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 2014: 3). Though this is a fairly drastic description, the fact remains that many associate rhetoric with both emptiness and extravagance.

However, Plato’s uncompromising opinion on rhetoric does not universally hold true. Cockcroft and Cockcroft suggest that rhetoric contains no inherent morality, and that the proper moral application of rhetoric depends entirely on the intentions of the speaker: “Rhetorical skill cannot operate unless there is insight, which will entail a proper empathy with the persuadee, an understanding of his or her needs, and a sense of the emotion that invests them” (2014: 3). Once in possession of this insight, the speaker will attempt to exploit the “ideological, personal and contextual elements” in their rhetoric (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 2014: 13).

The implementation of rhetorical devices and appeals to pathos and ethos are common strategies used by rhetoricians.

2.2.1 Appeals to Pathos
Cockcroft and Cockcroft follow Aristotle in defining the main purpose of appeals to pathos, “to denote all kinds of emotional influence on the audience, potentially affecting attitude or choice” (2014: 87). Not only can pathos affect attitude and choice, it can influence biases dictated by emotions, and in some cases even entirely change an audience’s mind on a previously biased topic (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 2014: 88). The effectiveness of pathos, therefore, is governed by a speaker’s ability to elicit a certain emotion from his or her audience, with a likely end goal in the form of attitude change.

Gross and Walzer note that pathos is very closely related to logos, given the fact that it contains certain aspects of rationality and reasoning (1992: 81). However, they make a clear distinction between the two, following Aristotle, stating that pathos
is “neither wholly propositional nor strictly “syllogistic”, nor is it wholly under the rule of logos, reason” (2008: 81). Regardless of the fact that logos facilitates emotions, and can identify the reasoning behind an emotional response, it can neither induce them nor manipulate them (Gross and Walzer 2008: 81). This suggests that though pathos very effectively works in tandem with logos, it is the former that finally dictates emotional response. Indeed, the degree of effect an appeal to pathos can have is entirely dependent on whether the audience is being affected by the emotion the speaker is appealing to (Braet 1992: 314).

Furthermore, once an appeal to pathos has been successful, the resulting emotion can “‘warp the mind and thence will strongly determine how it perceives and interprets any ‘premises’ presented to it, which it attends to, which it allows to count most powerfully, and which it ignores” (Gross and Walzer 2008: 81). Therefore, pathos has the power to “extinguish thought or force it into certain channels” (Gross and Walzer 2008: 81). This is a highly effective strategy in governing the subsequent processing of argumentation in a dialogue, argument, or speech.

Pathos is not only closely related to logos, but also to ethos, or an appeal to ethics. Cockcroft and Cockcroft describe the relationship between the two: “Pathos meaning adfectus (the whole range of emotion directed towards a person or object, and denoted by the word affect) includes the audience’s emotional response to the topic (pathos), and to the persuader’s personality and stance in treating that topic (ethos)” (2014: 88). The character, or rather the perceived character, of the speaker greatly influences the audience’s acceptance and reaction to any attempts at appealing to pathos.

2.2.2 Appeals to Ethos

Similar to Plato’s view on the lack of inherent morality in rhetoric, Aristotle claimed that ethos did not concern the inherent worth of the speaker, but instead had everything to do with establishing credibility and believability of the speaker for the sake of the audience” (Hyde 2004: 5). Modern ethos can be defined as “‘the set of values held either by an individual or by a community, reflected in their language, social attitudes and behavior’” (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 2014: 53). Ethos, then, is not just a quality of a speaker, but also of that speaker’s audience.

Indeed, Hyde states, “For example, we admire those who love their friends more than we admire those who love their money because loving friends is more
Knowing this, therefore, would prevent an aware speaker from appearing to love the idea of wealth more than the idea of friendship in order to appear more relatable to the audience. However, an audience might have the opposite opinion and favor the speaker who chooses wealth over friendship. In this case, the opinions and moral standing of the audience is “more persuasive than what is actually honorable” (Hyde 2004: 6). Therefore, contrary to Plato and Isocrates, *ethos* is not only a characteristic of the rhetorician, but also of his or her audience (Hyde 2004: 6).

The persuasiveness of the rhetorician is highly dependent on several factors. One of the most important factors is the construction of a dichotomy between the speaker and his or her opponents (Hyde 2004: 9). Through frequent references to the speaker’s virtue, and just as frequent references to his or her opponents lack thereof, “speakers make themselves appear honorable and praiseworthy, and make their opponents appear wicked” (Hyde 2004: 9). There are two ways the speaker can achieve this end. First, speakers must align themselves with their audience’s political standing, and second, speakers must appear to share personal similarity with their audience (Hyde 2004: 13).

Furthermore, Cockcroft and Cockcroft note the religious appeal of *ethos*, stating, “the enduring emotive power exercised by the sacred texts of all major religious traditions should be recognized as a form of *ethos*” (2014: 88). Religious appeals to *ethos* are often and widely implemented by rhetoricians aiming to align themselves with religious audiences or ideologies.

Aligning oneself to the *ethos* of an audience, however, is not the only manner in which persuasive success can be achieved. There are rhetoricians who are able to accomplish an extremely powerful form of persuasion, namely to “move the audience to conform to the speaker’s *ethos* and modify the audience’s habits and values (Hyde 2004: 13).

### 2.2.3 Rhetorical Devices

Not since the 1990s has the rhetorical device been of much valid interest and study in the rhetorical community, with Sperber and Wilson (1996) providing the most insight into the theory. Rhetorical devices had previously been difficult to reconcile with traditional persuasion theory, given their focus on transfers. Whereas appeals to *pathos* and *ethos* essentially focus on the speaker, and heuristic processing is more recipient-orientated, rhetorical devices fall between the two and are mostly concerned
with the process of transfer between speaker and recipient. The nature of rhetorical devices and their focus on the process occurring between speaker and recipient provides an additional and extremely relevant method of analysis.

2.3 Heuristic Processing

Shelley Chaiken outlines the core fundamentals of heuristic processing: “Recipients exert comparatively little effort in judging message validity: Rather than processing argumentation, recipients may rely on (typically) more accessible information such as the source’s identity or other non-content cues in deciding to accept a message’s conclusion” (1980: 752). Persuasion, therefore, does not entail systematic processing, in which individuals actively seek to reconcile arguments with a message’s conclusion (Chaiken 1980: 752).

Unlike systematic processing, heuristic processing involves independent variables, such as source factors, influencing a “recipient’s willingness to accept the message’s conclusion without necessarily influencing reception or acceptance of argumentation” (Chaiken 1980: 753). The link between argumentation and conclusion, which most individuals involved in systematic processing seek, is either not present or extremely backgrounded during heuristic processing.

The implementation of distraction, which can be understood as the foregrounding of secondary factors that are not directly linked to arguments, plays a large role in heuristic persuasion (Chaiken 1980: 753). It appears to be one of the defining pillars of the heuristic processing system, and “enhances persuasion by interfering with recipients’ abilities to critically evaluate persuasive argumentation” (Chaiken 1980: 753).

Though Chaiken herself acknowledges that very few studies have focused primarily on heuristic processing, she concludes that evidence for the effectiveness and relevance of heuristic persuasion can be found back in studies which show that recipients often accept or reject messages based on their attitudes towards non-content variables, such as the credibility of communicators (1980: 753).

The expert account is an integral part of heuristic processing. Chaiken and Maheswaran describes the phenomenon:

For example, heuristic processing would lead people to expect messages to contain more valid arguments when they stem from expert rather than
nonexpert sources and to expect attitude objects or attitudinal positions to be more worthy when they are liked or endorsed by many rather than few people. Because heuristic cues influence people's expectations about the probable validity of persuasive messages or the probable nature of attitude objects and issues, they should also function to bias people's perceptions and evaluations of the arguments contained in persuasive messages or, more generally, of ‘individuating’ information about attitude objects. Thus, if a message is delivered by an expert, its arguments may be perceived as stronger and elaborated on more positively than if the message is delivered by a nonexpert (1994: 461).

The concepts of speaker attractiveness and crowd consensus are inherent to heuristic processing (Chaiken 1980: 753). Speaker attractiveness also refers to how individuals perceive the speaker’s reliability and credibility, opinions that are usually formed by observing the speaker’s job, social position, social status, role in the community, etc. This phenomenon is also referred to as the liking-agreement heuristic, which “might derive from people’s past direct experience with others or, alternatively, may stem from a lower-order rule suggesting a fairly consistent association between the concepts of liking and interpersonal similarity” (Chaiken 1987: 4) Thus, the more relatable a speaker is and the more they have in common with their audience, the more likely they are to appear persuasive figures.

Crowd consensus, otherwise known as the phenomenon “consensus heuristic”, explains how recipients will more easily reject an argument if their peers are audibly doing the same around them (Chaiken 1980: 753). Though there are many cases in which the opposite can occur, such as individuals actively resisting the general consensus of any given situation (evidenced in the formation of countercultures), it is nonetheless the case that many individuals can, and do, follow crowd consensus.

Chaiken claims that cognitive processing of arguments is also heavily influenced by recipient involvement (1980: 754). When involvement is high, she states that individuals are more likely to implement systematic processing, which includes situations in which “recipients feel that their opinion judgments have important consequences for themselves (e.g., recipients may expect to discuss or defend their opinions, or to engage in behavior congruent with their expressed
opinions) or for others (e.g., jurors’ verdicts)” (Chaiken 1980: 754). In that same vein, she claims that if an individual is asked his or her opinion on a matter that is not important to them or in which their opinion will ultimately not have any bearing on the outcome, then they will be more likely to begin to process heuristically (Chaiken 1980: 754).

Therefore, Chaiken concludes that content-mediated opinion change occurring in situations of high involvement, and thus via the implementation of systematic processing, “should show greater persistence” (1980: 765).

Psychology Review

2.4 The Archetypal Hero

Dr. Carl Jung, world-renowned psychiatrist and psychotherapist, was the founder of the modern day archetype, among many other advances in the field of psychology. Jung, most famously perhaps, made the distinction between thinking and fantasy thinking, the former scientific and the latter mythological (Shamdasani 2009: 13). Out of this distinction arose the idea that mythological themes were apparent in both historical and modern cultures and societies. There was one myth, however, that he considered central to all others: “the archetypal hero” (Shamdasani 2009: 14).

This archetypal hero is present in so many of our modern day stories, such as Star Wars, The Lord of the Rings, Superman, and Harry Potter, to name only a few. The idea that a young boy (or girl, more recently) can set out on a journey and, during the process of saving his people or the world, even, cross the threshold into adulthood and become the mythological hero. Cross-culturally, the archetypal hero exhibits many shared traits, such as having no father and coming from a nondescript location (Johnson 1989: 15). Indeed, “there is a certain typical hero sequence of actions which can be detected in stories from all over the world and from many periods of time” (Campbell 1991: 166). Therefore, the existence of one archetypal hero that exists across cultures is a viable theory (Campbell 1991: 166).

Appropriate and relevant myths tend to spring up as humans enter new eras, myths that act as precursors for what will come and offer guidelines for dealing with “the psychological elements of the time” (Johnson 1989: ix). But what are these psychological elements, and how do we identify them or define them, let alone learn to cope with them? There is a certain paramount aspect of the archetypal hero’s
journey that can answer these questions: the idea of sacrifice. Morally, “the objective is that of saving a people, or saving a person, or supporting an idea” (Campbell 1991: 154). This sacrifice does not only ring true for affairs in the physical world; it resonates in the spiritual world as well. Regardless of whether you are “losing yourself, giving yourself to some higher end, or to another—you realize that this itself is the ultimate trial” (Campbell 1991: 154).

The modern world, however, has transformed the way in which mythology has found a place in our lives. Campbell (1991) describes the story of Don Quixote, the last medieval hero, as a prime example of how the changing world regulates our relationship with mythology. The story goes that though Quixote set out to fight giants, he instead found himself confronting windmills. Instead of bowing to the mechanistic world the time period was ushering in, represented by the windmills, Quixote invented a powerful wizard who he told himself had transformed the giants into windmills. By doing this, he became responsive to his environment, instead of his environment responding to him. Thus began the modern era, and the desperate need for mythology in a mechanistic world that governs human will, instead of adapting to it (Campbell 1991: 160).

Religion as well, in some form or another, has always influenced the archetypal hero. It shares many similarities with mythology and also has a very deep spiritual function in human life:

Much of our religious heritage is a map or set of instructions for the deepest meaning of our interior life, not a set of laws for outer conduct. To relate to our religious teaching only in its literal dimension is to lose its spiritual meaning. This dimension of materialism is far more harmful than much of what is usually condemned under that dark name (Johnson 1989: 30).

It is on a spiritual level, therefore, that concepts such as religion and mythology will be the most meaningful and significant in the life of the archetypal hero. That being said, however, it is important to remember that “myth is a living entity, and exists within every person” (Johnson 1989: x).

The mythological hero’s identity is more than a savior, more than a warrior, and more than a religious vessel. He does not strive for personal happiness or
fulfillment, and once an individual abandons the notion that either of these goals is the meaning of life, the closer that individual is to becoming the hero (Johnson 1989: 79).

The following sections illustrate two key facets of the archetypal hero: coming of age and masculinity.

2.4.1 Coming of age
Joseph Cambell, whose work was greatly influenced by Carl Jung’s work on the relationship between myth and human psyche, describes the archetypal hero as someone “who has found or done something beyond the normal range of achievement and experience” (1991: 151). Campbell identifies two separate journeys the hero embarks upon: the physical, in which the hero partakes in battle or rescues another, and the spiritual, in which the hero has an otherworldly experience which teaches him about human spirituality (1991: 152).

However, in order to embark on these dual physical and spiritual quests and reach the end of the hero’s journey, an individual must first make the transition from childhood into adulthood, though these processes can occur simultaneously. Typically, the transition is triggered when the hero begins to feel something lacking in his life, whether it is caused by his culture, his family, or a force he cannot consciously identify (Campbell 1991: 152). The hero sets out, and the journey begins.

This transition from childhood to adulthood is not to be mistaken with physical maturation, or puberty. There is a clear distinction made between an individual’s physical maturation and their spiritual maturation. Campbell describes this spiritual change, one that we all must go through, as a child giving up his “infantile personality and psyche” (1991: 152). This is the essential catalyst of the archetypal hero: “To evolve out of this position of psychological immaturity to the courage of self-responsibility and assurance requires a death and a resurrection” (Campbell 1991: 152).

As the hero evolves and sheds the child-like aspect of himself, he is able to identify what the most important challenge of his life will be: to sacrifice himself for a higher cause (Campbell 1991: 152). Campbell describes this as a turning point in our maturation, stating, “when we quit thinking primarily about ourselves and our own self-preservation, we undergo a truly heroic transformation of consciousness” (1991: 152-153). This transformation of consciousness is a combination of trials and revelations (Campbell 1991: 153).
There is, however, a certain danger in worshipping the idea of the archetypal hero. It may happen that individuals who are not directly involved in what they perceive as heroic deeds feeling sidelined and inadequate, something that is happening very frequently in our modern time (Campbell 1991: 160). This feeling of inadequacy could potentially lead to an individual who has yet to cross the spiritual threshold between puberty and maturity to mistakenly attempt to partake in what they perceive as a heroic deed. This could potentially lead to severe harm to both the would-be and those around him. Campbell warns: “When you follow the path of your desire and enthusiasm and emotion, keep your mind in control, and don’t let it pull you compulsively into disaster” (1991: 162).

This problem is very likely caused by the transition of humanity into the modern era. In ancient times, boys partook in rituals that signified their transition from childhood to adulthood. Because of this, they knew that it was their turn to become men and that they had to shed the fetters of others and become independent both in body and thought (Campbell 1991: 192). There is no such indication for boys in this modern era.

The importance of this archetypal adventure is not exclusive to one culture or society, but rather, to all of humanity. Mythology is inherent. The story of a child becoming a young adult, or the experience of a spiritual awakening ushered in by the end of adolescence is a pattern that can be found back in every culture, religion, and movement (Campbell 1991: 167). In Greek mythology, Telemachus is instructed by Athena to leave his mother and set out to find his father, Odysseus. As Campbell points out, it is not always the physical father, but a spiritual or abstract father the hero sets out to find, such as a divine being or a god (1991: 168).

Religion is filled with mythological motifs, not least of all the symbolic maturation of the most holy figures. Campbell relates how Mohammed came upon his vision of the Koran:

At the time of his election, Mohammed was an illiterate camel-caravan master. But every day he would leave his home in Mecca and go out to a mountain cave to meditate. One day a voice called to him, ‘Write!’ and he listened, and we have the Koran (1991: 172).
Though Mohammed, like Jesus, was already a physically mature man at the time of his spiritual awakening, it is exactly that spiritual transition that concerns the hero’s true coming of age. Buddah, on the other hand, was still a youth at the time of his awakening.

Like religion, one of the greatest aspects of mythology is the ability to not fear death. When one engages in a righteous battle, and his life is in jeopardy, the righteousness of his actions strip away all sense of fear. There is a constant cycle of death and resurrection that permeates the journey of the archetypal hero. Campbell calls this “the cardinal initiation of every heroic adventure—and achievement” (1991: 188).

2.4.2 Masculinity
Robert Johnson describes how the myth of the Holy Grail can apply to our modern day dilemmas, stating, “One can say that the winds of the twelfth century have become the whirlwinds of the twentieth century” (1989: ix). More specifically, the myth of the Holy Grail lays the foundations of masculine psychology (1989: x). The ideas of masculinity and coming of age, especially in the case of the archetypal hero, are very closely related and often overlap.

The myth begins with the infliction of the Fisher King wound upon the Fisher King, who represents western man (Johnson 1989: 4). This wound may be triggered by an event, an injustice, or something that shatters a child’s perpetually joyous worldview (Johnson 1989: 5). Johnson notes that “every adolescent receives his King Fisher wound; he would never proceed into consciousness if it were not so” (1989: 4). The Fisher King wound, “the experience of alienation and suffering that ushers him into the beginning of consciousness” (Johnson 1989: 7), can also be identified with Campbell’s sense of lacking in the archetypal hero, a feeling of emptiness or incompleteness that spurs the hero on to his journey (1991: 152).

Johnson notes that these feelings of incompleteness, inferiority, and estrangement that affect the hero can be found back everywhere in our society—indeed, “the Fisher King wound is the hallmark of modern man” (1989: 7). From a modern perspective, the Fisher King wound manifests itself in the everyday life of a man:
A man suffering in this way is often driven to do idiotic things to cure the wound and ease the desperation he feels. Usually he seeks an unconscious solution outside of himself, complaining about his work, his marriage, or his place in the world (Johnson 1989: 8).

Men suffering from their Fisher King wound, therefore, may act out in foolish, even dangerous ways. There is no way around this, unless the wound has been identified and is “proceeding with the task of consciousness which was inadvertently started with the wound in his youth” (Johnson 1989: 8). Until then, however, this “wounded archetypal underpinning manifests itself in problems in our external lives” (Johnson 1989: 8).

Johnson tells us that the Fisher King wound can only be cured by the innocent, adolescent part of oneself (1989: 12). In the Grail myth, this part of oneself is represented as Parsifal, a young boy who becomes a knight at King Arthur’s court. This name has a dual meaning: firstly, it means “innocent fool”, and secondly, it refers to an individual that can bring opposing forces together (Johnson 1989: 14). Carl Jung had a similar experience with his Parsifal following his schism with Sigmund Freud. In desperation, he looked inside of himself and called upon his childlike self, focusing all of his thought into this repressed part of himself. What followed was “an outpouring from the collective unconscious” that both cured Jung and introduced the world to Jungian psychology (Johnson 1989: 15). Allowing Parsifal to touch the Fisher King wound will thus heal a man and bring balance to his spirit, which is the true meaning of masculinity.

The myth goes on to describe the battle between Parsifal, now a knight of King Arthur’s court, and the Red Knight. When Parsifal kills the Red Knight, he takes the residual energy from his vanquished enemy and forms the foundations of his masculine ego, and thus crosses the threshold from boyhood to manhood (Johnson 1989: 22). Though there exist other ways of dealing with the Red Knight, especially in non-western cultures, it is the western way “to go the heroic path and to vanquish—by killing or conquering” (Johnson 1989:23). It is no surprise then that many adolescents search for their Red Knight in order to cross this threshold and validate themselves as men. This victory is usually seen as the most rewarding when another is defeated, a trait Johnson hypothesizes as being inherent to masculinity (1989: 23).
The Red Knight presents a clear and present danger to those who cannot adequately cope with the battle or the struggle. Someone who cannot take his Red Knight head on risks becoming a bully or overly shy (Johnson 1989: 24). Johnson describes this struggle with the Red Knight and how it plays a part in a man’s masculine psyche:

The Red Knight is the shade side of masculinity, the negative, potentially destructive power. To truly become a man the shadow personality must be struggled with, but it cannot be repressed. The boy must not repress his aggressiveness since he needs the masculine power of his Red Knight shadow to make his way through the mature world (1989: 24)

Therefore, denial of the Red Knight, and thus a man’s masculine aggression, can lead to weakness and inability to cope in the outer world. On the other hand, being defeated by the Red Knight, and thus allowing one’s masculine aggression to take over, can lead to the cultivation of a hateful, angry, confused man.

A man’s journey involves the constant search for what Johnson calls “the Grail” (1989: 54). This is a feeling of searching for something, a hunger for something essential that has been missing in a man’s life, a heightened state of consciousness that defines him as a man. This hunger is often exploited, as seen in advertising, for man will buy anything if he thinks it is his Grail (Johnson 1989: 55). Johnson cites the example of drugs use as a common path towards experiencing the ecstasy of the Grail: “Drugs will take you to an ecstatic experience and bring a legitimate visionary world; but they do it in a wrong way and exact a terrible price” (1989: 55). Indeed, much of the reckless, thoughtless behavior in male adolescents can be attributed to their Grail hunger (Johnson 1989: 55).

Indeed, this misinterpretation of what a man’s Grail is can lead to the adoption of an imitation masculinity. Parsifal, at the beginning of his journey, carries with him a sword that has not yet been tested. It is told to him that this sword will break the first time he attempts to use it, though after it is repaired, it will be impervious to destruction (Johnson 1989: 60). Johnson elaborates on this imitation masculinity:

This is fine bit of advice for a youth; the masculine equipment he carries with him, largely imitation of the father-teachers around him, will not
hold up when he tries to use it by himself. Every youth has to go through the humiliation of finding that his imitation masculinity will not hold up (1989: 60).

If a man pursues something that is not his Grail calling, he runs the risk of developing a constructed, false masculinity. This false masculinity, at some point, will be exposed and the man will realize that he also mistakenly pursued a false Grail.

2.5 Research Questions and Hypotheses

The linguistic and psychology review has led to the formation of suitable hypotheses for the research questions. Here follows a reiteration of the research questions:

1. How do the videos appeal to the coming of age of potential new recruits in the west?
2. How do the videos appeal to the masculinity of potential new recruits in the west?
3. How effective is the implementation of rhetorical devices, heuristic processing cues, and the appeals to *pathos* and *ethos*?

Based on the literature review, I have formulated three hypotheses in answer to the above research questions.

Firstly, I hypothesize that the videos will appeal to the coming of age of potential new recruits in the west by appealing to the ideas of sacrifice, fearlessness, the search for a father figure, and spirituality. These characteristics of coming of age are based off of Campbell’s (1991) theories regarding the archetypal hero and the presence of mythological patterns present in modern times.

Secondly, I hypothesize that the videos will appeal to the masculinity of potential new recruits in the west by appealing to the psychological conceptions of the Fisher King wound, the Red Knight, and the Grail. These conceptions are directly off of Johnson’s (1989) work regarding male masculinity and mythology.

Lastly, I hypothesize that the implementation of rhetorical devices, heuristic processing cues, and the appeals to *pathos* and *ethos* in the videos will be highly effective. This is based off of the theoretical and empirical evidence provided by
3. ISIS

Introduction
In this chapter, a brief history of ISIS and its media wing, Al-Hayat media, are discussed. Firstly, section 3.1 details the inception of ISIS and presents a brief history of the organization as presented in *The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria: The History of ISIS/ISIL* (Charles River Editors 2014). Section 3.2 examines Al-Hayat media and their recent activities. Lastly, section 3.3 discusses the recent, and overwhelming, surge of western recruitment.

3.1 Inception and Brief History
Contrary to popular belief, ISIS is not simply an offshoot of al-Qaeda, though the two groups did join forces in Iraq before the dissemination of their alliance in 2014 (Charles River Editors 2014: 9).

The late Abu Musab al-Zarqawi is credited for the initial inception of ISIS (Charles River Editors 2014: 1). During the period of alliance between ISIS and al-Qaeda, al-Zarqawi would periodically receive funds from Osama bin Laden, former leader of al-Qaeda, while overseeing an al-Qaeda-run training camp in Herat. During this time, ISIS was known as Jam’at al-Tawhid wa’al-Jihad (henceforth JTJ) (Charles River Editors 2014: 10).

The events of 9/11 eventually lead to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, where al-Zarqawi’s militant group continued to expand while battling the American troops (Charles River Editors 2014: 12). It was during the war in Iraq that JTJ released many violent videos of beheadings, the majority of which were rejected worldwide by Muslims, with the exception of Sunni extremists in Iraq and various other locations. This was the beginning of the group’s video recruitment strategies, with a steady stream of fighters swelling the ranks of JTJ (Charles River Editors 2014: 13).

JTJ officially merged with al-Qaeda in 2004. The group subsequently changed its name to Tanzim Qaidat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn, though it became more commonly known as al-Qaeda in Iraq (henceforth AQI) (Charles River Editors 2014: 14). From 2004-2006, the newly named AQI carried out many terrorist attacks and was soon considered more radical than al-Qaeda. Leadership of the group passed into

Leadership of AQI passed to Abu Ayyub al-Masri. As AQI continued its terrorist attacks over the next two years, a U.S. backed movement known as the Sahwa was formed specifically to contain and counter AQI activities in Iraq. Shortly after al-Masri’s ascension to power, the AQI suffered a series of devastating defeats at the hands of the Sahwa and a new wave of American troops (Charles River Editors 2014: 16). In 2006, al-Masri became the war minister for a new group consisting of AQI remnants, called the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), while an individual named Abu Omar al-Baghdadi was appointed the new leader of the group. al-Baghdadi’s existence, however, was hotly disputed by the U.S. government, who accused al-Masri of inventing this new leader as a cover (Charles River Editors 2014: 17).

For four years, the identity of ISI’s leader remained uncertain, while the group continued to grow and transform into an organized, structured force (Charles River Editors 2014: 18). With the deaths of both al-Masri and al-Baghdadi in 2010 at the hands of U.S. and Iraqi soldiers, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the current leader of ISIS, came to power (Charles River Editors 2014: 19-20).

After the U.S. withdrew from Iraq in 2011, around the start of the Arab Spring, it is likely that many Sahwa fighters joined ISI after Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki went back on his promise of allowed them to join the Iraqi army, greatly contributing to the growing strength and numbers of ISI (Charles River Editors 2014: 22).

2011-2013 saw spikes of terrorist and suicide attacks under the leadership of al-Baghdadi. In the spring of 2014, al-Baghdadi announced the inception of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (henceforth ISIL), also commonly referred to as ISIS, which hinted at the group’s plans for expansion, especially into Syria (Charles River Editors 2014: 24). ISIS had been extremely active in the Syrian civil war already since 2013, savoring the chance to fight against the Shiite regime led by now-infamous President Bashar Assad (Charles River Editors 2014: 30). ISIS’s violent entrance and participation in the Syrian civil war solidified their ultimate ideological goal: to establish the Islamic Caliphate (Charles River Editors 2014: 32).

When al-Qaeda officially severed ties with ISIS in 2014, the group was quick to rename itself once again, this time to the “Islamic State”. The group also appointed al-Baghdadi as the Islamic Caliph as they announced their plans for an Islamic State,
calling on all Muslims to join them. ISIS’s main claim was that the existence of the Islamic Caliphate took power away from all existing secular Muslim governments and that nationality was ruled null and void due to the implementation of Sharīʿah law. Additionally, they proclaimed that all Muslims who did not join the Caliphate would be killed (Charles River Editors 2014: 37).

3.2 Al-Hayat media center
Al-Hayat media center, the creator and distributor of ISIS propaganda, was launched in 2014 and has since then made its presence known on social media platforms such as Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Bereznak 2015). The media center, which has enjoyed “access to a worldwide communication medium that is essentially unregulated” (Barber 2015), has gained extensive recognition in western media, and has been tooted as the deliverer of “the most elaborate public relations strategy” coming out of the Middle East (Becker 2014). Their videos, in particular, are known for their HD quality and slick feeling, a far cry from images and videos being posted on members’ social media accounts (Becker 2014).

John Kerry, U.S. Secretary of State, notes that ISIS recruits “among the disaffected and disenfranchised, but also among those of all backgrounds on a misguided quest for meaning and empowerment” (Barber 2015). Furthermore, according to MEMRI’s Jihad and Terrorism Threat Monitor (JTTM), Al Hayat Media is “specifically targeting Western and non-Arabic speaking audiences” (2014). This nature of this new international focus is extensive and “follows ISIS’s general media strategy of distributing diverse materials in several languages, including new videos and subtitles for existing videos, and also articles, news reports, and translated jihād materials” (MEMRI 2014). Furthermore, the “character and quality of the productions suggest that the staff is experienced in producing media materials for Western audiences” (MEMRI 2014).

The Guardian compares the high production quality of ISIS videos to the low quality, grainy videos of bin Laden decade, stating that “ISIS is in competition with western news channels, Hollywood movies, reality shows, even music video, and it has adopted their vocabulary” (Rose 2014). It appears that the two main goals of Al-Hayat media are to instigate conflict with the U.S. and other western powers, and to recruit new members from non-Islamic countries (Rose 2014).
The content of typical Al-Hayat produced videos varies across a wide spectrum. The media center favors a balance between gruesome beheading videos, such as the murders of James Foley, Steven Sotloff, David Haines and Alan Henning, and Hollywood-style feature length productions, such as *Flames of War*, which “mythologizes Isis’s military heroism with gruesome footage and florid prose” (Rose 2014), comparing its portrayal of warfare as “a real-life Grand Theft Auto” (Rose 2014).

3.3 Recent Developments in Recruitment

ISIS recruiters all over the globe are focused on searching for new recruits via social media from Canada, Britain, and the U.S, to name only a few western countries (Masi 2014). An estimated 20,000 non-Muslim recruits, hailing from roughly 80 different countries, have joined ISIS (Fernandez 2015).

This surge of recruitment is said to be a product of ISIS’s media presence, whose style is “more like that of the Western grassroots movements propagated by a countercultural use of new media, such as Occupy Wall Street, the Tea Party, anarchist, and far left movements that utilize smart mobs” (Fernandez 2015). The difficulty of dealing with ISIS is largely due to its counterculture status, something western governments are neither able to adapt to nor understand (Fernandez 2015). While western governments are unable to operate on the same wavelength as ISIS, there can be little to nothing done to counteract the group’s massive appeal.

While ISIS physically moves across the Middle East, capturing city after city in both Syria and Iraq, their propaganda overseas continues to successfully “recruit young, brainwashed Western nationals” (Moore 2015). It has been noted that two core groups ISIS targets are “teens at risk of being recruited by terrorist or apathetic youths” (Bereznak 2015). Indeed, “they hold out to alienated young people the promise of a better life” (Barber 2015).

Britain, especially, remains a hotbed for ISIS recruitment activity. Young Muslim men toe a precarious line between their parent’s religion and a western world prone to Islamophobia (Anwar 2015). ISIS “exploits this identity crisis by offering them a new life” (Anwar 2015). ISIS acts as the fantasy these confused young men wish to lose themselves in. However, the reality of the situation remains: “full of adolescent frustration, young Muslims are being lured into a romanticized and
glamorous world which bears no relation to the misery actually inflicted by ISIS” (Anwer 2015).

BBC investigative journalist Peter Taylor attributes many of these feelings of resentment and anger to western foreign policy. Hanif Kadir, a former would-be jihadist who had previously travelled to Afghanistan as an al-Qaeda recruit, told Taylor, “If we look around the world today, at Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Chechnya, and Kashmir, it doesn’t take much to frustrate a young person, especially a young Muslim” (Taylor 2011: 233). It seems that the west is stifling for young men who have become disillusioned with its culture and dealings with other countries.

Youth radicalization through propaganda is evident in statements made by young recruits themselves. For example, a young man from Texas, Asher Abid Khan, was arrested after the U.S. uncovered messages on his Facebook stating, “I don’t want to fight for war booty or for nationalism. I want to just rise the laws of Allah and be [a martyr] in his cause” (Bereznak 2015). ISIS has the uncanny power to appeal to the spirituality of angry, frustrated, young men, instead of focusing solely on their potentially destructive urges.

However, not all recruits settle for the reality of ISIS. Recently, roughly 120 individuals (out of 20,000 recruits) were killed for attempted desertion, though some made it back to the west alive full of resent and feeling as if they had been duped (Harissi 2015).
3. Methodology

Introduction
This chapter discusses the methodology that was used to acquire the results that were necessary to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Section 3.1 focuses on the video materials analyzed in this study. Lastly, section 3.2 elaborates on the procedure used to analyze the video materials in terms of persuasive and rhetorical tactics and their underlying psychological messages.

3.1 Material
Two videos, both created and distributed by Al-Hayat media, were analyzed in this study.

3.1.1 Flames of War
The first video, titled Flames of War (henceforth FoW), was released on September 17, 2014, and is roughly 55 minutes long. The video was obtained from LeakSource (2014).

The nearly full-length film plays out like a Hollywood movie; there is a clear story running through the film’s narrative in between heroic and grisly scenes of war, brutality, and murder. The film is packed with exciting visuals, soundtrack-style music, both disturbing and uplifting images, and extremely persuasive language. During most of the film’s runtime, an unseen individual narrates the 55 minute-long sequences of events, which detail ISIS’s military takeover of major outposts and cities throughout Iraq and Syria. The video’s dialogue is not only provided by a single narrator; FoW also includes footage of speeches given by ISIS khalīfah Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and various mujāhidūn that range from humble and sincere to vengeful and apoplectic. Though some of the dialogue is in Arabic, such as Qur’an verses, the video consistently provides English subtitles.

The Hollywood-esque style of FoW is why I chose to analyze it for this study. It is one of the more infamous videos that has been recently released by Al-Hayat media, and its linguistic content alone, though in no way condoned by this study, warrants a detailed analysis.
3.1.2 There is No Life Without Jihad

The second video, titled *There is No Life Without Jihad* (henceforth *TNLWJ*), was released on June 19, 2014, and is roughly 13 minutes in length. It was sourced from New York Magazine.com (2015).

This video is in stark contrast with *FoW*, in that it does not involve the establishment of a clear narrative. Instead, *TNLWJ* focuses on a group of foreign *mujāhidūn* hailing from western countries, such as Britain and Australia.

The entire video is a compilation of short speeches delivered by each *mujāhidūn* explaining why *jihād* is obligatory and must be accepted by all. The atmosphere of the collective speeches ranges from imploring to shaming, while each *mujāhidūn* speaks in clear, almost native English.

I chose *TNLWJ* for this study’s analysis because of its contrast with *FoW*. The difference in apparent content and their extremely differing styles of presentation resulted in the second video analysis of *TNLWJ*. Furthermore, I hoped there would be a range of linguistic content to study throughout both videos.

3.2 Procedure

This section describes the preliminary research (3.2.1), data collection (3.2.2) and linguistic and psychology analyses (3.2.3) of this study.

3.2.1 Preliminary Research

Preliminary research focused on studying the works of Joseph Campbell (1991) and Robert Johnson (1989) and identifying the main facets of the archetypal hero, namely in regards to coming of age and masculinity, previously listed in section 2.3. The following is a reiteration of these characteristics:

- Sacrifice
- Fearlessness
- The search for a father figure
- Spirituality
- The Fisher King wound
- The Red Knight
- The Grail
3.2.2 Data Collection
First, evidence of appeals to pathos and ethos were looked for. Second, evidence of rhetorical devices were looked for. Both FoW and TNLWJ were extensively examined multiple times in order to identify instances of both types of appeals and rhetorical devices. Examples that did not directly appeal to the aforementioned characteristics of the archetypal hero are not discussed in this paper and were not analyzed any further. The number of these discarded examples was not significant.

After the relevant linguistic content had been collected, it was organized into tables indicating 1) from which video they had been retrieved, and 2) whether they were rhetorical devices or appeals to pathos or ethos. Roughly twice as many appeals to pathos than ethos are identified and included in this study. The specific rhetorical devices identified are anadiplosis, anaphora, asyndeton, epistrophe, metaphor, and personification.

To complete the linguistic analyses, identification of heuristic processing cues were looked for throughout the narrative of both videos. Several speeches containing these cues were identified, though this study only analyzes two. The reason for this is that not all the speeches contained the relevant appeals to the archetypal hero this research is focusing on. However, the number of these speeches not analyzed was not significant.

Two short speeches were taken from FoW and TNLWJ. The first example, taken from FoW, is a full-length speech delivered by ISIS khalīfah Abu bakr al-Baghdadi delivered in Arabic and translated via subtitles into English. The second example, taken from TNLWJ, is a fragment of a longer dialogue delivered by a foreign (western) mujāhidūn. Evidence for the liking-agreement heuristic (Chaiken 1980) and the expert account (Chaiken 1987) were found.

3.2.3 Linguistic and Psychological Analysis
Following the identification and organization of the examples of rhetorical devices, appeals to pathos and ethos, and heuristic processing cues, a three-part analysis took place. These separate analyses aimed to discover whether the examples appealed to any of the characteristics of the archetypal hero, namely sacrifice, fearlessness, the search for a father figure, spirituality, the Fisher King wound, the Red Knight, and the Grail. The outcome of these analyses are discussed in detail in section 5.
5. Results and Analysis

Introduction
An analysis of both FoW and TNLWJ revealed the presence of many appeals to pathos and ethos (laid out in 5.1), extensive use of rhetorical devices (laid out 5.2), and the manipulation and encouragement of heuristic processing (laid out in 5.3) as appeals to the coming of age and masculinity of the archetypal hero.

5.1 Appeals to Pathos and Ethos
Table 1 lists the appeals to pathos found throughout the narrative of FoW.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appeals to Pathos in Flames of War</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. “The reply from the White House was deceitful”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “The mujāhidūn represent the epitome of sacrifice”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “The noblest of deaths”</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. “The best of the best, in search of the greatest of rewards”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. “A breed of men unmatched in their fearlessness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. “Mujāhidūn only accept victory or shahīd”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. “Highly disciplined, fearless, and patient tank hunter units”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first example (“The reply from the White House was deceitful”) paints the White House, even though America as a whole is meant here, as a cunning, deceptive, and evil ultimately enemy. Most of the video is directed either at the “White House” or President Obama personally, though it is understood that both represent the greater western power that is the United States. The White House, then, is a representation of Johnson’s Red Knight: the spiritual or, in this case, physical entity which adolescents must confront and defeat in order to cross the threshold into manhood (Johnson 1989).

Examples 2-5 and 7 all refer to the mujāhidūn. The examples illustrate how references to the jihād fighters are extremely emotive in their language. Examples 2, 3, and 6 (“The mujāhidūn represent the epitome of sacrifice”, “The noblest of deaths”, and “Mujāhidūn only accept victory or shahīd”) are highly reminiscent of Campbell’s (1991) archetypal hero as the martyr, whose sole purpose (self-sacrifice) is realized when he makes the transition from spiritual immaturity to spiritual maturity. Death is
not to be feared, but to aspire to, if one is in service to a higher power or the greater good. For the mujāhidūn, there is no middle ground.

Similarly, examples 4, 5 and 7 (“The best of the best, in search of the greatest of rewards”, “A breed of men unmatched in their fearlessness”, “Highly disciplined, fearless, and patient tank hunter units”) illustrate what Campbell’s (1991) ideas of righteousness and fearlessness. By describing the mujāhidūn as searching for the greatest of rewards, the FoW narrator is alluding to spiritual rewards instead of earthly rewards, touching upon the archetypal hero’s “ultimate trial” of accepting that he must serve a higher power instead of himself (Campbell 1991: 154).

Following from this, when the hero realizes that he must embrace righteous acts, he no longer feels fear (Campbell 1991), illustrated by FoW’s carefully worded description of the mujāhidūn, including words like “unmatched”, “fearlessness”, “highly disciplined” and “fearless”.

Table 2 lists the appeals to pathos found throughout the dialogue of TNLWJ.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2</th>
<th>Appeals to Pathos in There is No Life Without Jihad</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “Are you willing to sacrifice this for the sake of Allah?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “There are two types of people: those who will find every single excuse to come to jihād, and those who will find every single excuse not to come to jihād”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “What prevents you from obtaining martyrdom and the pleasure of your lord while you know your brothers are there on the front line, facing the bullets, the bombs? While you’re sitting in comfort, while you’re sleeping, going shopping, they’re giving their blood”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “The mujāhid doesn’t feel death, except like the sting of an insect”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As with the previously discussed findings, the themes of sacrifice and fearlessness are prominent in TNLWJ. Examples 1 and 3 (“Are you willing to sacrifice this for the sake of Allah?” and “What prevents you from obtaining martyrdom and the pleasure of your lord? While you know your brothers are there on the front line, facing the bullets, the bombs, while you’re sitting in comfort, while you’re sleeping, going shopping, they’re giving their blood”) seek to instill a sense of guilt and shame while advocating sacrifice and the acceptance of death. At the same time, the inherent worth of those who would commit themselves to martyrdom or would sacrifice themselves for a higher power is once again a focal point.
Example 4 ("The mujâhid doesn’t feel death, except like the sting of an insect") is spoken by a mujâhid. The young man insinuates that he does not fear death, and belittles it, comparing it to a small sting. This has two effects: the first is to shame anyone who may fear the pain of death, and the second is to suggest that all mujâhidûn are fearless.

Similarly, example 2 ("There are two types of people: those who will find every single excuse to come to jihâd, and those who will find every single excuse not to come to jihâd") weaves together the dual emotions of shame and fearlessness. The speaker, another mujâhid, manages to separate people into two categories: the brave and the cowardly. If jihâd is the representation of the archetypal hero, then clearly those who are not strong enough to become Campbell’s martyr and sacrifice themselves are not heroes.

The appeals to pathos in both tables 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 illustrate Gross and Walzer’s (2008) theory that pathos can effectively influence thought and “force it into certain channels”. Furthermore, these results illustrate that, depending on how skillfully they are implemented, appeals to pathos can dictate a desired emotional response (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 2014).

Table 3 lists the appeals to ethos found throughout the narrative of FoW. Further examples of appeals to ethos will be discussed in section 5.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appeals to Ethos in Flames of War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. “O you who have believed, when you meet those who disbelieve advancing, do not turn to them your backs” (Al-Anfal 8:15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “And if those who disbelieve fight against you, they certainly would have turned their backs, then they would have found neither a Wali (protector) nor a helper” (Al-Fath, 48:22)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coinciding with Cockcroft and Cockcroft (2014), both examples ("O you who have believed, when you meet those who disbelieve advancing, do not turn to them your backs” and “And if those who disbelieve fight against you, they certainly would have turned their backs, then they would have found neither a Wali (protector) nor a helper”), passages from the Qu’ran detailing the courage of the mujâhidûn in contrast with the cowardliness of the kuffâr, are clear appeals to ethos.

The narrator’s appeal to ethos here is twofold: he aligns himself as a staunch religious believer who trusts in the word of the Qu’ran, and he also manages to
portray the *mujāhidūn* as the brave warriors being quoted in the passages who are under the protection of Allah. In line with Hyde (2004), the narrator not only aligns himself with religious fundamentalism, he also relates to the audience’s political inclinations. Islam has been politicized by ISIS under *Shari‘ah* law, and therefore these appeals to *ethos* speak not only to religious fundamentalism, but also to political zeal.

Therefore, according to Campbell’s (1991) martyrdom of the archetypal hero, the *mujāhidūn* are untouchable and pure given their special status afforded to them by Allah.

### 5.2 Rhetorical Devices

Table 4 lists the rhetorical devices found within the narrative of *FoW*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rhetorical Devices in Flames of War</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anadiplosis</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. “In the face of the dark wave of the crusader force, the historical land of two bore life to a mission that would transform the political landscape of the world. A mission that would herald a return to the <em>khalīfa</em> and revive the creed of <em>Tawhīd</em>”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “You can see them now digging their own graves in the very place they were stationed. The very place they were stationed terrorizing the Muslims in Raqqa”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anaphora</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. “This is the end of every <em>kāfir</em> that we get a hold of. This is the end that they face”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asyndeton/anaphora</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. “Nourished by the blood of the truthful <em>mujāhidūn</em>, to unite the <em>ummah</em> under one call, one banner, one leader”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epistrophe</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. “Allah is our protector, and they have no protector”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metaphor</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. “Thus the war between <em>ummah</em> and <em>kuffār</em> was ignited”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “Regional puppets”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “Believers who were chosen by Allah, answered the call of the Prophet <em>sallallahu-alaihi wasallamethos</em>”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “The thick fumes of death”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. “They are stallions of life, as they”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
valiantly rush in”
6. “The enemy was torn asunder”
7. “No, by Allah, da’wah has never been a road lined with roses and sweet basil. The price of da’wah is heavy”
8. “Their very foundation was weak, they only stood to fall”
9. “And the fruits of patience ripened into a number of overwhelming victories”
10. “The black pages of history that testify to the tyrannical and murderous rise of the secular state were now coming to a close”
11. “Light glowed from the mujāhidūn”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personification</th>
<th>1. “The ravenous flames kept spreading”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. “The flames of war were burning furiously”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first example of anadiplosis (“In the face of the dark wave of the crusader force, the historical land of two bore life to a mission that would transform the political landscape of the world. A mission that would herald a return to the khilāfa and revive the creed of Tawḥīd”) the repetition of “mission” is used for reinforcing effect. The focus of these two sentences is clearly the new mission of ISIS: to rebuild the Muslim Caliphate and convert all to Islam. This focal point on the mission of ISIS is a clear example of the feeling of lacking Campbell (1991) describes which triggers the archetypal hero to leave his home and set out on his journey (1991). This mission is also the spiritual embodiment of Johnson’s (1989) Grail; a man will constantly search for his one true purpose in life, the one purpose that will define him as a man.

The second example of anadiplosis (“You can see them now digging their own graves in the very place they were stationed. The very place they were stationed terrorizing the Muslims in Raqqa”) is also used for reinforcing effect, and brings attention to Raqqa and what had previously been conspiring there. An appeal to Johnson’s (1989) Fisher King wound can be found here; the speaker is illustrating what will happen to those who oppress Muslims. He is playing on the likelihood that the viewer will have suffered, or is currently suffering from, a similar Fisher King wound of oppression, and therefore would be more accepting of the murders of those deemed responsible (Johnson 1989).

In the example of anaphora (“This is the end of every kāfir that we get a hold of. This is the end that they face”), the repetition of “this is the end” serves as a
climactic effect; the fate of the kuffār, another physical embodiment of Johnson’s (1989) Red Knight, rings with a finality and brings its encompassing section of the video to a close.

The following example functions as both an asyndeton and an anaphora and has dual empathic and climactic effects: “Nourished by the blood of the truthful mujāhidūn, to unite the ummah under one call, one banner, one leader”. The repetition and lack of conjunctions serve to emphasize unity and singularity of purpose (“one x”). This coincides with Campbell’s (1991) theory that one of the main functions of the archetypal hero is the unwavering support of an idea. To answer the call of Allah, to serve under the banner of ISIS and to pledge allegiance to the khalīfa is the true calling of the mujāhidūn, and any other true Muslim.

The epistrophe (“Allah is our protector, and they have no protector”) is used for emphatic effect; the kuffār have not completed their spiritual journey and found Campbell’s (1991) spiritual father figure, but the mujāhidūn have. The emphasis on the protector, or father figure, acts as an invitation to young men who have yet to find this figure in their own lives, and contrasts the mujāhidūn’s trust in Allah with the kuffār’s lack of spiritual awareness.

The following examples are all instances of metaphor that serve to enliven the imagery and associations experienced by the target audience.

Examples 1, 2, 6, 8 and 10 (“Thus the war between ummah and kuffār was ignited”, “Regional puppets”, “The enemy was torn asunder”, “Their very foundation was weak, they only stood to fall”, and “The black pages of history that testify to the tyrannical and murderous rise of the secular state were now coming to a close”) draw a very distinct picture of the secular leaders of the kuffār. Similar to FoW’s depiction of the “White House” as the overarching enemy, the Red Knight of the western hemisphere, these metaphors serve to paint the secular leaders of the Middle East as regional Red Knights. The language used also serves to glorify otherwise clear warmongering tactics: referring to war as a fire that can be “ignited”, describing the defeat of the enemy as being “torn asunder” as if they are non-human entities, describing the enemy as a “weak” “foundation” that will be toppled and “fall” at the hands of the mujāhidūn, and referring to the time period as the “black pages of history” that will soon come to an end.

Similarly, examples 4, 5, 6, and 9 (“The thick fumes of death”, “They are stallions of life, as they valiantly rush in”, “No, by Allah, da’wah has never been a
road lined with roses and sweet basil. The price of *da’wah* is heavy”, “And the fruits of patience ripened into a number of overwhelming victories”) are metaphorical descriptions appealing to the battle as the *mujāhidūn* confront their Red Knights: war is depicted as a fire burning with the “fumes of death”, the charging of the *mujāhidūn* into battle is the charging of “stallions”, the *da’wah* is a “heavy” path bereft of “roses” and “sweet basil”, and the successful battles are trees whose victories were “ripened” by the “fruits of patience”.

Though the previous examples of metaphor have focused mainly on the physical journey of the archetypal hero, examples 3 and 11 (“Believers who were chosen by Allah, answered the call of the Prophet Sallallahu-alaihi wasallamethos” and “Light glowed from the *mujāhidūn*”) attest to the spirituality and heightened awareness brought about by the spiritual journey. By “answering” the call, the *mujāhidūn* have embarked on the journey that will teach them about their own human spirituality, and thus metaphorical “light” glows form their enlightened consciousness (Campbell 1991).

Both examples of personification (“The ravenous flames kept spreading” and “The flames of war were burning furiously”) are also metaphorical in nature and deal with the physical battle of the archetypal hero. Their purpose, like the previous examples of the physical battle, is the glorification of war. The use of the animate “ravenous” and “furiously” offset the western notion of *jihād* (at least in the context of how ISIS implements it) as murder suicide, and instead, like the previous examples, paint it with descriptive, metaphorical words that mask its disturbing, violent nature.

Table 5 lists the rhetorical devices found within *TNLWJ*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rhetorical devices in <em>There is no Life Without Jihad</em></th>
<th>1. “We don’t need <em>jihād</em> from you, it’s <em>you</em> that needs <em>jihād</em>”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anadiplosis</td>
<td>1. “Are you willing to sacrifice the fat job you’ve got, the big car you’ve got, the family you have?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asyndeton</td>
<td>1. “Allah does not need you to fight for him, <em>you</em> need to fight for him”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistrophe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The repetition in the example of anadiplosis (“We don’t need jihād from you, it’s you that needs jihād”) and in the example of epistrophe (“Allah does not need you to fight for him, you need to fight for him”) emphasize the direct address to individual viewers. Additionally, it emphasizes the need for young men to give their lives to Allah and participate in jihād in order to be worth anything as a man, and thus, become the archetypal hero (Campbell 1988).

The omission of conjunctions in the example of asyndeton (“Are you willing to sacrifice the fat job you’ve got, the big car you’ve got, the family you have?”) functions as an emphatic, climactic buildup of the sentence, which, once again, has sacrifice as its focal point. The progression of severity steadily increases from “fat job”, to “big car”, to “family”, finally. Similar to previous examples (see Table 5.1.2), guilt and shame are used by the mujāhidūn to insinuate that those who do not give up their worldly possessions and follow jihād are not worthy.

5.3 Heuristic Processing Cues
The following example is a speech given by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS, geared towards exploiting heuristic processing via the expert account (Chaiken 1987) and the liking-agreement heuristic (Chaiken 1980). The speech is originally delivered in Arabic, but FoW includes English subtitles for this particular segment, as follows:

So this is the basis of the religion, a book that guides, and a sword that aids. Indeed your brothers the mujāhidūn were blessed with victory by Allah tabaraka wa ta’ala, and were blessed with consolidation after long years of jihād and patience, and fighting the enemies of Allah; Allah guided them and strengthened them to establish this goal. Therefore, they rushed to announce the khilāfa and appoint an imām. This is an obligation upon the Muslims, an obligation which was abandoned for centuries, and disappeared off the face of the earth. So many Muslims were ignorant of it, and they are sinful for abandoning it. It is always obligatory upon them to establish it. So now they have established it, to Allah is all praise and from Him are all blessings. I was burdened with that great matter. I was burdened with this trust, this heavy trust. I was appointed as a leader for you, although I am not the best of you, nor am I better than you. Therefore,
if you see me upon truth, then aid me. And if you see me upon falsehood, then advise me and correct me. Obey me as long as I obey Allah concerning you (Leaksourse 2014)

al-Baghdadi’s status as a religious leader and expert (Chaiken 1987) has already been realized, given his ascension to the top ranks of ISIS. Therefore, the first few sentences, in which he claims that Allah is entirely responsible for the victories ISIS has enjoyed thus far, are likely to be accepted on the basis of his current status alone. He speaks of a “goal”, recalling the “mission” previously referred to in the outset of FoW (see table 4), and reminding his audience of ISIS’s endgame.

al-Baghdadi continues on to chastise Muslims for losing sight of their destiny to reinstate the khilāfa, simultaneously referring to it as an “obligation” and “obligatory” while calling Muslims who have not taken up the call to reinstate the Islamic State “sinful” and “ignorant”. Once again, Campbell’s (1991) urge to search for what is lacking and Johnson’s (1989) Grail, representative of this Muslim obligation to reinstate the khilāfa, have become apparent. al-Baghdadi’s status as a religious leader and expert is being exploited.

al-Baghdadi’s tone switches over to humility, however, in the concluding lines of the speech. He claims that he was “appointed” leader and that he was “burdened” with the great task of leading them. This recalls the role of Campbell’s (1991) archetypal hero who sacrifices his own personal desires for the good of others, or for a greater cause.

He goes on to state that he is “not the best” of the Muslims nor is he “better” than any of them. Here, the liking-agreement heuristic comes into play: al-Baghdadi manages to achieve what Chaiken (1980) calls interpersonal similarity by relating with his audience and assuring them that he is the same as them. al-Baghdadi paints himself as the archetypal hero who makes sacrifices to serve a higher power while simultaneously comparing himself to everyone watching. Therefore, the underlying message is that if they are all indeed like al-Baghdadi, the hero of ISIS, they will join the cause and fight with the mujāhidūn, just as he has done.

The next example is part of a speech given by a mujāhid in TNLWiJ. It is delivered in English:
Oh my brothers, living in the west, I know how you feel, in your heart, you feel depressed, the Prophet *sallallahu-alaihi wasallamethos* said “the cure for the depression is *jihād*”. You feel like you have no honor, the Prophet *sallallahu-alaihi wasallamethos* said “the honor for the *ummah* is *jihād*”. O my brothers come to *jihād* and feel the honor we are feeling, feel the happiness we are feeling (New York Magazine 2015)

The *mujāhid* is using the liking-agreement heuristic (Chaiken 1980) to relate to his audience. He begins by immediately identifying with the depression of those that are suffering in the west. These are their Fisher King wounds (1989): depression and lack of honor. In contrast to these emotions, the *mujāhid* claims that *jihād* is the cure and will give them honor. Essentially, he is offering his audience a chance to claim their Grail (Johnson 1989), represented here by the ecstasy and happiness of being a *mujāhid*. This is his final proof: he, who shares interpersonal similarity with his audience, once felt the pain of depression, but was able find salvation through *jihād*.

Coinciding with Hyde (2004), both speeches also illustrate strong appeals to *ethos*. Both al-Baghdadi and the *mujāhid* are able to demonstrate personal similarity with the audience, demonstrating the importance of the dual nature of *ethos*: the character of the speaker and the character of the audience.
6. Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction
This chapter discusses the results, analysis, and conclusions of this paper. Section 6.1 discusses the research questions and shortcomings, followed by a brief discussion of the effectiveness of the identified persuasive tactics in 6.2, a conclusion in 6.3, followed by implications for further research in 6.4.

6.1 Discussion of Research Questions
This section deals with comparing and contrasting the research questions, hypotheses, and reviewed literature with the results of the study and concluding with a brief discussion of shortcomings.

6.1.1 Coming of Age
In section 2.5, I hypothesized that sacrifice, fearlessness, the search for a father figure, and spirituality would be facets of coming of age the videos would appeal to. This hypothesis proved correct, for all these characteristics of coming of age were identified at least once in the study and analyses of the videos.

ISIS effectively advocates martyrdom, personal sacrifice, and fearlessness through appeals to pathos and ethos, the use of rhetorical devices, and the liking-agreement heuristic.

Sacrifice and Fearlessness
ISIS uses the ideas of sacrifice and martyrdom, present in many religions, to appeal to a young man’s need to mature. Campbell (1991) describes this process of maturation as a “transformation of consciousness”, an individual realizing that they are not the center of the universe and then dedicating himself to a higher power or a greater good.

ISIS not only manipulates the desire for nobility, honor, and purpose to advocate sacrifice, but it also heavily implements shaming tactics to achieve a similar end. For example, ISIS calls for the audience to leave their jobs, their possessions, and their families behind, while portraying those who are unable to do this as fearful, and thus, unworthy of jihād. This contradicts O’Keefe’s (2004) theory of the subjective norm, in which persuaders will use the conception of opinions of family
members, friends, or loved ones to sway their audience towards a certain goal or behavior. ISIS does the opposite of this, calling for their audience to abandon all personal ties and accept *jihād*. This most likely has to do with the fact that ISIS predominantly targets young males from the west, who are living in societies where the radically fundamentalist ideologies of ISIS are unacceptable.

This is problematic, naturally, in that sacrifice and martyrdom are often exploited by terrorist organizations in order to convince individuals to commit acts of terror for religion, political purposes, etc. The higher purpose ISIS is referring to is the reinstatement of the *khilāfah*, a goal whose nature is not necessarily harmful, but whose manner of execution is neither objectively nor intrinsically good.

**Spirituality and the Father Figure**

Closely related to the advocacy of sacrifice and fearlessness are the issues of spirituality and the search for the father figure. In contrast to the rhetoric of violence and revenge found in the examples of fearlessness, the attainment of spirituality is ISIS’s non-violent persuasive go-to. The examples of metaphor appealing to spirituality advocate enlightenment, inner peace, and spiritual awareness coincide with Campbell’s (1991) description of the spiritual journey of the archetypal hero.

Following from this spiritual journey, the father figure is used by ISIS to appeal to the divine father figure the hero must search for (Campbell 1991). Indeed, Johnson (1989) posits that the fatherless hero appears across cultures and is one of the aspects of an individual that defines him as an archetypal hero. The example of epistrophe aligns Allah as Campbell’s (1991) divine father figure and additionally names him as a protector and guide, while contrasting the spiritual awareness of the *mujāhidūn* with the lack of spirituality of the *kuffār*.

This focus on religion and Allah coincides with Johnson’s (1989) theory that religion is intrinsically tied to the archetypal hero and is constantly influencing him. However, the issue with ISIS’s interpretation of the Islam, and by extension the word of Allah, lies in what Johnson (1989) describes as the harmful literal interpretation of religious teaching. ISIS’s insistence on the use of radicalism and violence, in particular, disrupts any true spirituality for their *mujāhidūn*.
6.1.2 Masculinity

In section 2.5 I hypothesized that the mythological conceptions of the Fisher King wound, the Red Knight, and the Grail would be facets of masculinity the videos would appeal to. This second hypothesis was also proved correct; evidence for all three conceptions were identified in the analyses of the videos.

ISIS appeals to the Fisher King wound, the Red Knight, and the Grail through the implementation of rhetorical devices, the liking-agreement heuristic, appeals to *pathos* and *ethos*, and the expert account.

*The Fisher King*

ISIS appeals to several common Fisher King wounds throughout the dialogue of both videos. The example of anadiplosis identifies the Fisher King wound of oppression, which ISIS uses to equate the oppression of the murdered Muslims in Raqqa to the oppression viewers in the west are facing. Similarly, the *mujāhid’s* speech appeals to the Fisher King wounds of depression and lack of honor in an attempt to convince viewers that the solution for these negative emotions is *jihād*.

This focus on the Fisher King wounds of the viewers uncovers an underlying psychological issue of young men living in the west, especially if they have Muslim backgrounds. Johnson (1989) posits that individuals suffering from their Fisher King wound and who are unable to cure it are likely to resort to foolish, dangerous behavior. Ed Husain (2007) describes at length his and his comrade’s mounting feelings of displacement and oppression as young, English-speaking Muslims living in the west. The pressure to conform to the western way of life while simultaneously practicing Islam in their own homes led to a schism of identity, which ultimately resulted in many of them joining radical Islamist groups in and around the U.K either directly or indirectly linked to organizations like Al-Qaida and the Taliban (albeit in their earlier stages of inception). ISIS, being a later affiliate of groups like Al-Qaida and the Taliban, is entirely aware of this pervading feeling of displacement experience by young English-speaking Muslims. They are offering viewers a cure to their depression caused by displacement and alienation.

Displacement, however, is not exclusive to Muslims living in the west. According to Johnson (1989), all male adolescents suffer from a Fisher King wound, in some form or another. Therefore, ISIS’s appeals to the feelings of depression, oppression, and lack of honor do not only appeal to young Muslim youths living in
the west, but also to non-Muslim youths who may be able to relate to these negative emotions.

The Red Knight

The Red Knight is one of the most common themes found throughout the study of both videos. An appeal to *pathos* paints the White House as the physical entity of a Red Knight while rhetorical devices illustrate the *kuffār* and the secular heads of Middle Eastern governments as additional physical Red Knights.

The appeal to the Red Knight is one of the most alluring persuasion tactics implemented by ISIS, because a poorly handled Red Knight can have crippling effects. Johnson’s (1989) theory posits that repressing and denying the Red Knight can lead to weakness and stunted masculinity, and thus an inability to cope and function in the mature world. However, Johnson (1989) goes on to explain that allowing the Red Knight to take over can lead to the formation of an angry and hateful man. ISIS appears to be trying to circumvent both of these outcomes by offering their audience a chance to tackle their respective Red Knights head on. This tactic is very appealing, seeing as that male adolescents will constantly search for a Red Knight in order to prove that they have become men (Johnson 1989).

The issue with ISIS, however, is that they are constructing Red Knights based on what would appeal the most to their audience. This means that members of the target audience, who have already been established as actively searching for their Red Knight, are likely to relate to the constructions ISIS is bombarding them with (the White House, the *kuffār*, and secular Arab governments as the enemy). Identifying with at least one of these constructed Red Knights seems very plausible, especially given their relationships with the aforementioned Fisher King wounds of depression, oppression, etc.

The Grail

The Grail is one of the mythological themes found throughout both videos. An example of anadiplosis and al-Baghdadi’s speech identify the Grail as the mission of ISIS (to restore the *khilāfa*), while the *mujāhid*’s speech equates the Grail with the feeling of joy and ecstasy an individual receives from embracing *jihād* as their calling.
Similar to the previous discussion of the Red Knight, the search for and misinterpretation of the Grail can lead adolescents to act out and adopt an imitation masculinity respectively (Johnson 1989). Johnson (1989) also notes that this Grail hunger is often exploited, especially in advertising, which is highly persuasion-centric mode of communication.

Young men running away from home to join ISIS in the Middle East is a clear example of the dangers of the Grail hunger. Using jihād and the promise of the khilāfa as bait, ISIS is able to convince young men, who are frantically searching for their Grail, to join the ranks of the mujāhidūn in Iraq and Syria. Johnson’s (1989) reckless behavior and acting out can be recognized in this impetuous exodus from family, friends, and country to join the mujāhidūn in their self-proclaimed righteous war against the kuffār and enemies of Islam. This also recalls O’Keefe (2004), in that ISIS is attempting to skew descriptive norms to attract young men, based on a misconception of what is right and what everyone else is doing.

The adoption of an imitation masculinity (Johnson 1989) is most likely what awaits many of the young new recruits of ISIS. Young men who have been convinced by ISIS that jihād is their Grail and will feed their hunger may come to realize that committing acts of violence and war in the name of Allah is not their true calling and, in fact, may have the opposite effect of what they originally hoped for. They will continue this masculine posturing up until the moment they recognize it for what it is.

6.1.3 Effectiveness of Persuasive Tactics
This study found that the use of rhetorical devices and appeals to pathos and ethos were extremely effective persuasive strategies as implemented by ISIS. The various rhetorical devices identified in section 5 brought attention and emphasis to the underlying psychological messages. The appeals to pathos and ethos (also identified in section 5) were successfully identified as being implemented by ISIS for emotive and expert persuasion regarding specific psychological messages.

Chaiken’s (1980) theory of heuristic processing, including the liking-agreement heuristic and the expert account, was very much cohesive with the analysis of the results on two accounts.

One of the main hypotheses of Chaiken’s (1980) theory of heuristic processing is that high involvement will most likely lead to systematic processing, whereas low involvement will most likely lead to heuristic processing. The results of this study
suggest the same; the results find that, given the fact that audience members most likely have a low level of involvement, peripheral persuasion is implemented with clear evidence of heuristic processing (liking-agreement heuristic and expert account). I say there is a low level of involvement because of the observation of many new recruits coming from predominantly non-Islamic countries and therefore not having as much knowledge of the religion or ISIS in general. Also, the study has shown that heuristic processing cues are evident in the video material, and would therefore suggest the targeting of a group with low levels of involvement. Therefore, the results of this study support Chaiken’s (1980) claim that in the case of ISIS propaganda videos, a low level of involvement can lead to heuristic processing.

Another hypothesis of Chaiken’s (1980) is that opinion change governed by systematic processing is more persistent than opinion change governed by heuristic processing. However, both the results of this study and real world observation suggest that opinion change governed by heuristic processing is equally as persistent as opinion change governed by systematic processing. The results of this study show that non-content cues are evident in much of ISIS rhetoric, even though the migration of western recruits to ISIS territory is increasing at an alarming rate. Therefore, it can be concluded that opinions brought about through heuristic processing can also be highly persistent.

6.2 Shortcomings

Though this study has hypothesized that audience involvement is low, it is difficult to make any kind of informed conclusion as to what actual levels of involvement could be. Though it can be said that involvement is low, at least for western individuals who become recruits, this study cannot investigate whether or not involvement is initially high or low or develops over the course of watching a video, for example. The difficulty lies in the fact that for this study, it is impossible to observe or test relevant subjects (individuals having been successfully recruited by ISIS). Therefore, I can only hypothesize that involvement is low based off of this research’s results and real world observations of recruitment success within predominantly non-Islamic western countries.

This study’s flow of research was often impeded by the unavailability of relevant videos either due to restrictions or removal. This resulted in a relatively small
pool of available videos for analysis, though the videos in this study were more than sufficient to obtain significant and telling results.

Given the maximum length and scope of the study, I was unable to include an accompanying study on how ISIS appeals to young females in the west. This study exclusively focuses on the appeal to males and therefore does not offer an entirely comprehensive view of ISIS’s methods of persuasion, both on linguistic and psychological levels. That being said, however, the purpose of this study was to examine the ISIS appeal to young males and at no point claims to provide a comprehensive view of ISIS persuasive appeal in general.

6.3 Conclusion
This study focused on how ISIS implements certain persuasive tactics to attract young western men by appealing to their fantasy of the archetypal hero.

Firstly, the results indicate that ISIS effectively implements appeals to *ethos* and *pathos*, various rhetorical devices, and heuristic processing cues in their propaganda videos. It was also found that there were two differences between the results and existing theories of heuristic processing, namely that high involvement can also lead to heuristic processing and that opinion change mediated by heuristic processing can be highly persistent.

Secondly, ISIS draws out the archetypal hero fantasy by appealing to coming of age in the form of sacrifice, fearlessness, spirituality, and the father figure, elaborated on by Campbell (1991). It was additionally found that ISIS appeals to the masculinity of young western men in the form of the psychological conceptions of The Fisher king, the Red Knight, and the Grail theorized by Johnson (1989). The study suggests that ISIS appeals to these underlying psychological messages in order to attract young western men to join their organization.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research
This study has shown that ISIS appeals to young men in the west by appealing to their fantasy of the archetypal hero. However, this does not provide a comprehensive view on ISIS propaganda in general.

A suggestion for further research would be to carry out a similar study as conducted in this paper, but instead of focusing on two videos, study a higher number of videos in order to gauge a higher amount of results and conduct both a quantitative
and qualitative study. The addition of a quantitative aspect to the study would provide more concrete evidence on trends and tactics implemented by ISIS across a wider spectrum.

An idea for further research would involve a study of ISIS propaganda geared exclusively towards women. The value in such a study would be to discover if any of the same persuasion tactics identified in this study are implemented in ISIS propaganda geared towards females, and if any female-centric psychological conceptions are appealed to.
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