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PRESENTS

Leaderless Jihad: Radicalization in the West

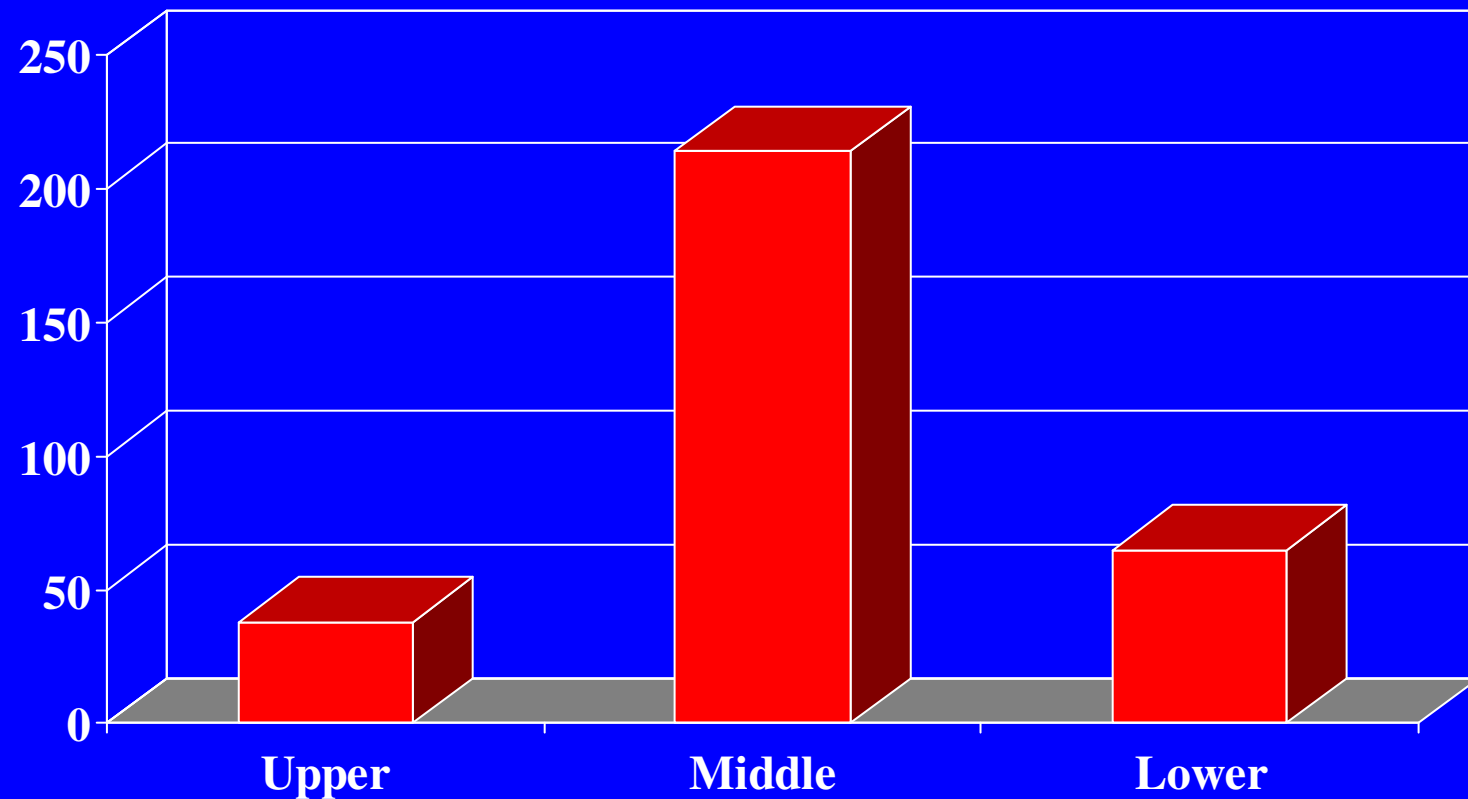
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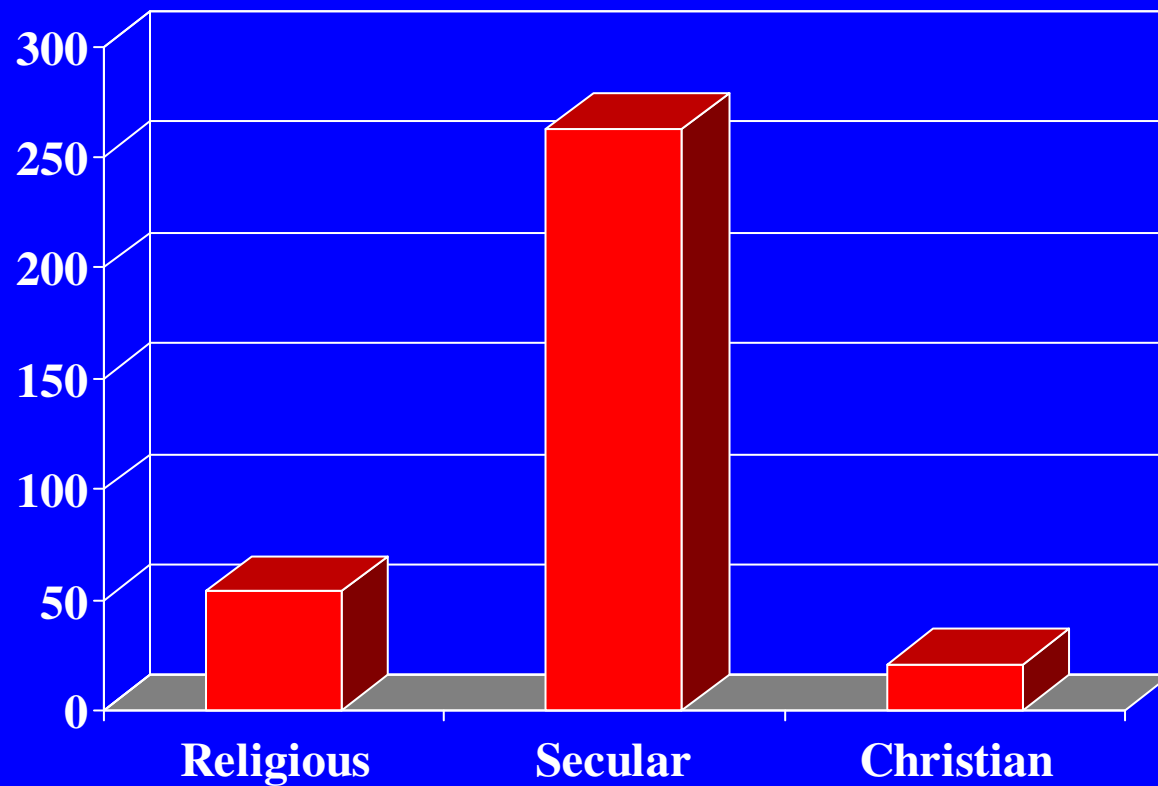
Methodology of Research

- Application of scientific method to terrorism studies:
 - Evidence based terrorism research
 - Open source data
- Specific threat to the U.S.
 - 9/11 perpetrators as index sample
 - 400 biographical fragments
 - Trial transcripts > OSC > Academic papers

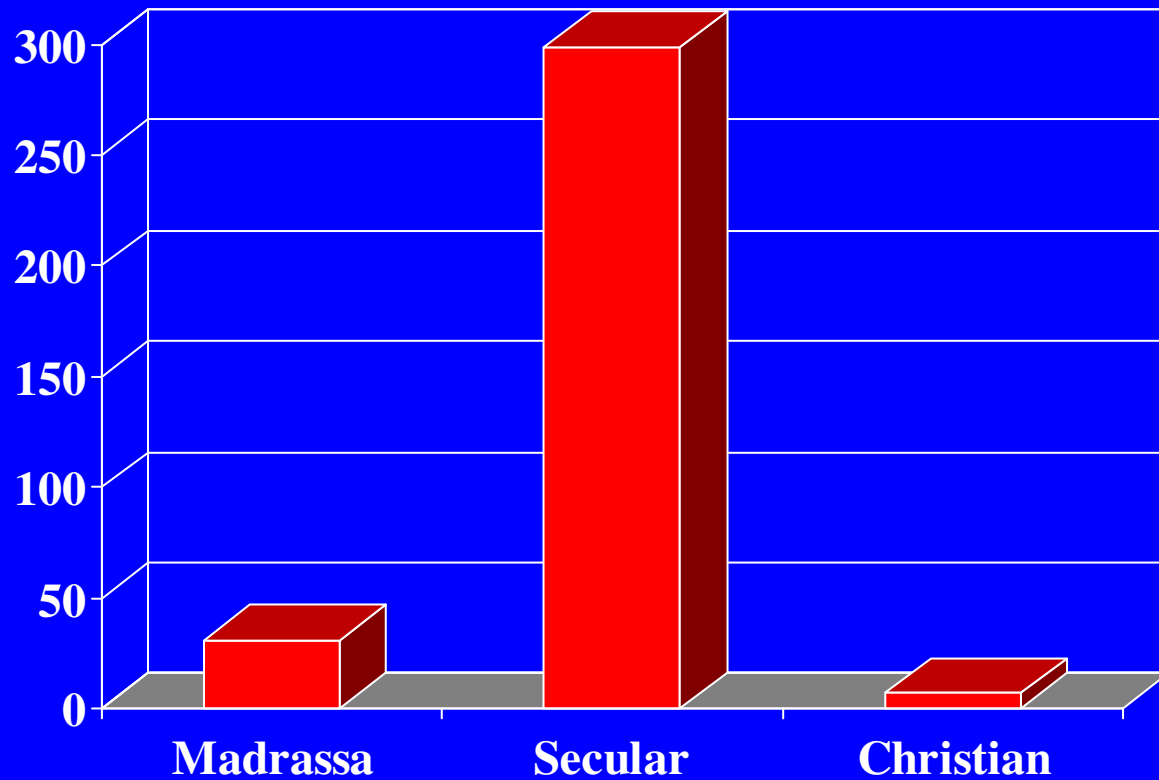
Poverty?: Family of origin (SES)



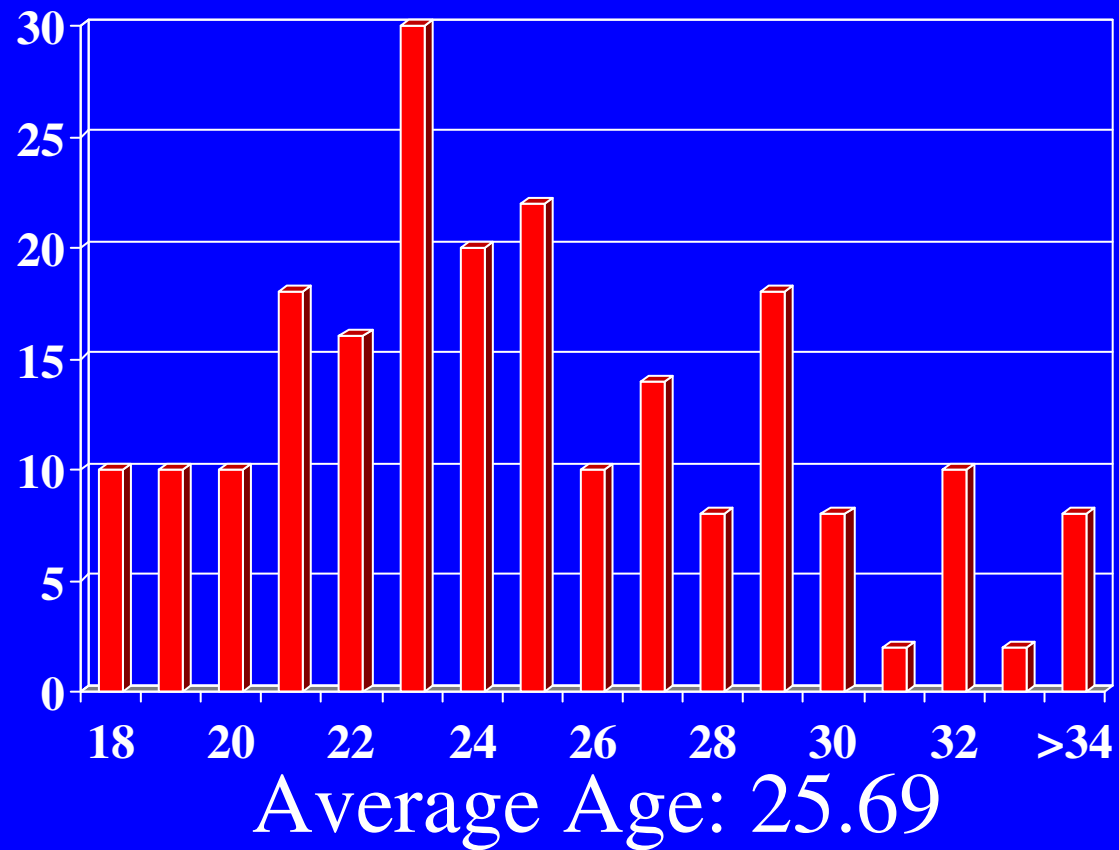
Islam?: Devotion as youth



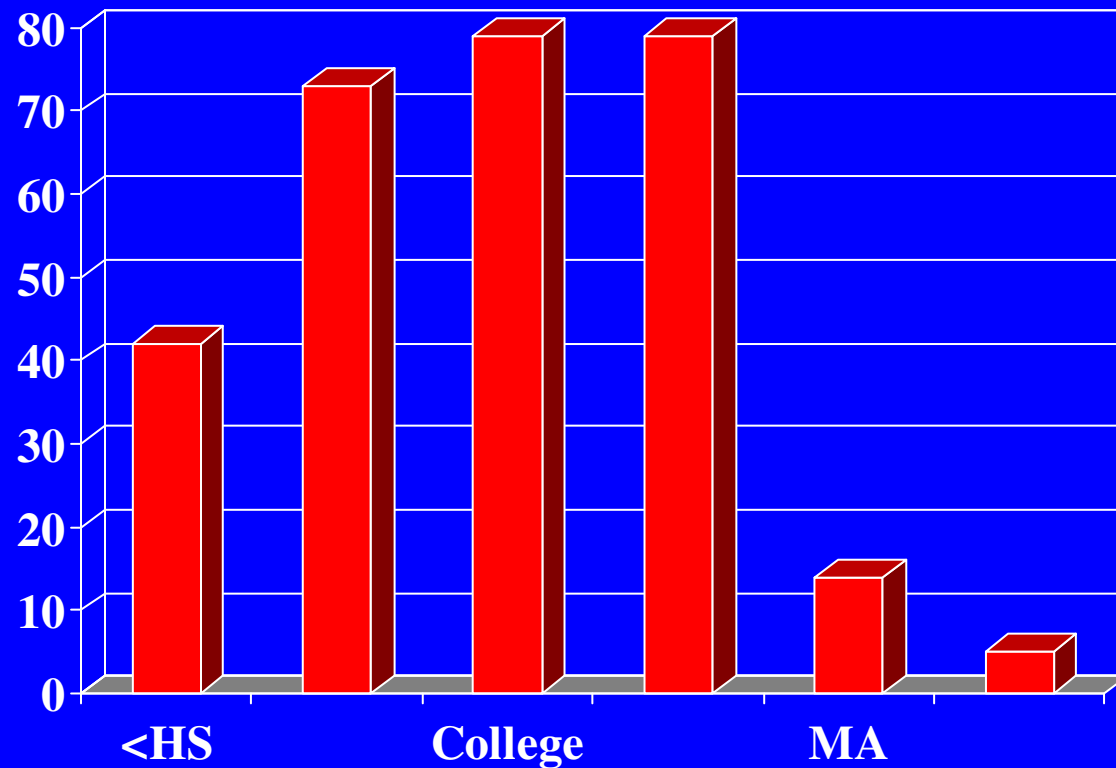
Madrassa?: Educational background



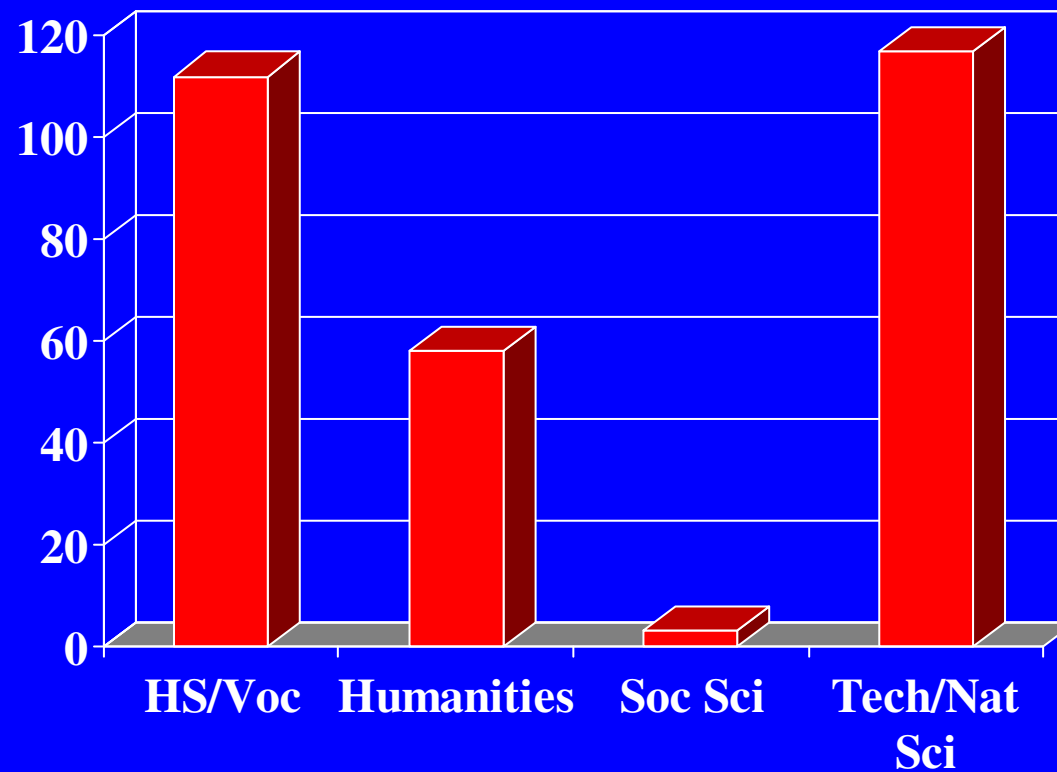
Naïve teenagers?: Age at joining



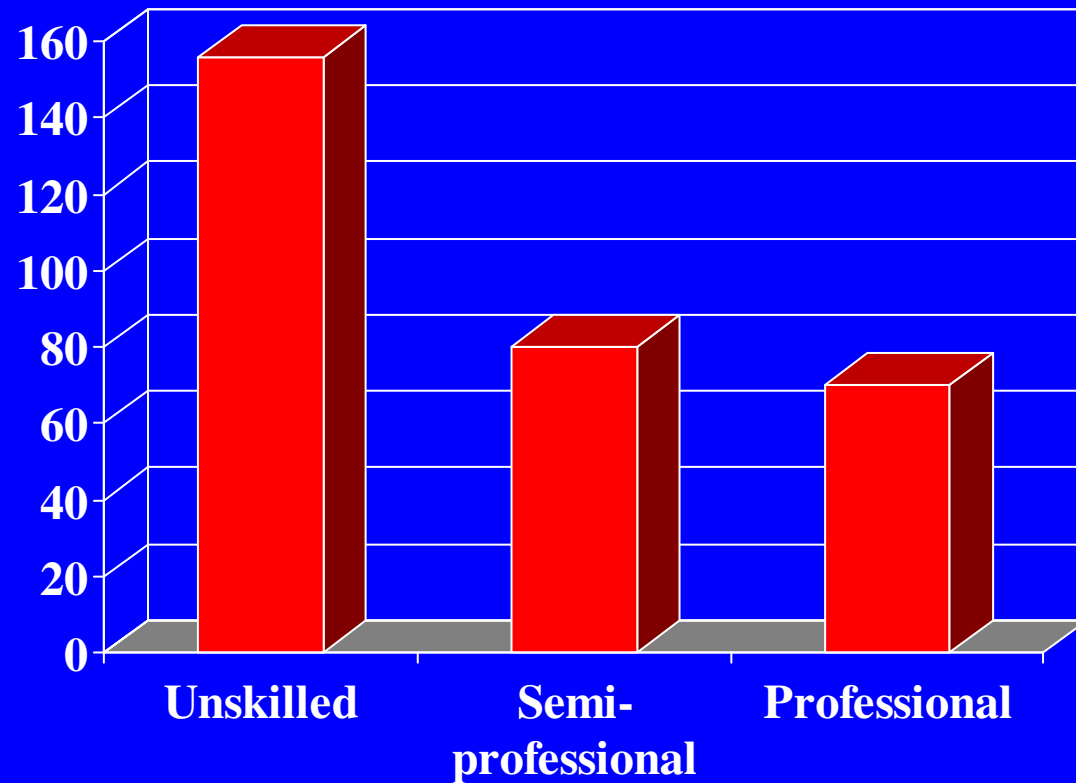
Ignorance?: Levels of education



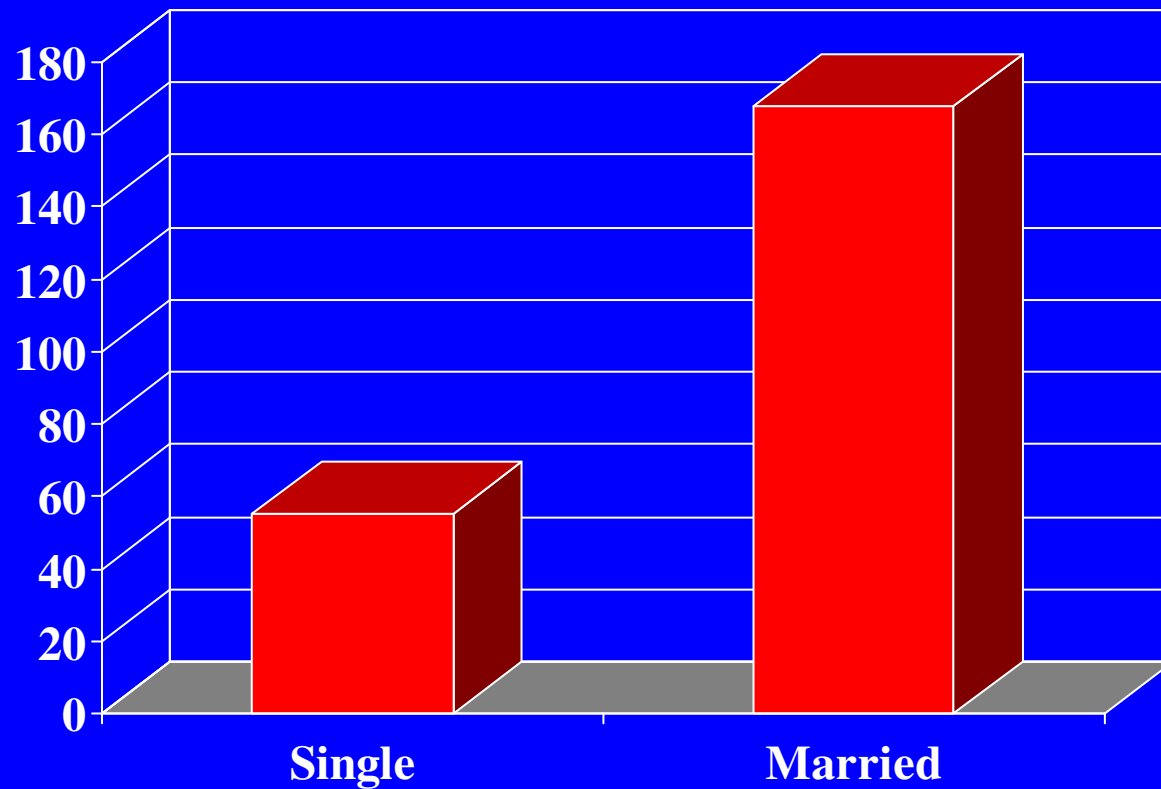
Religious?: Type of education



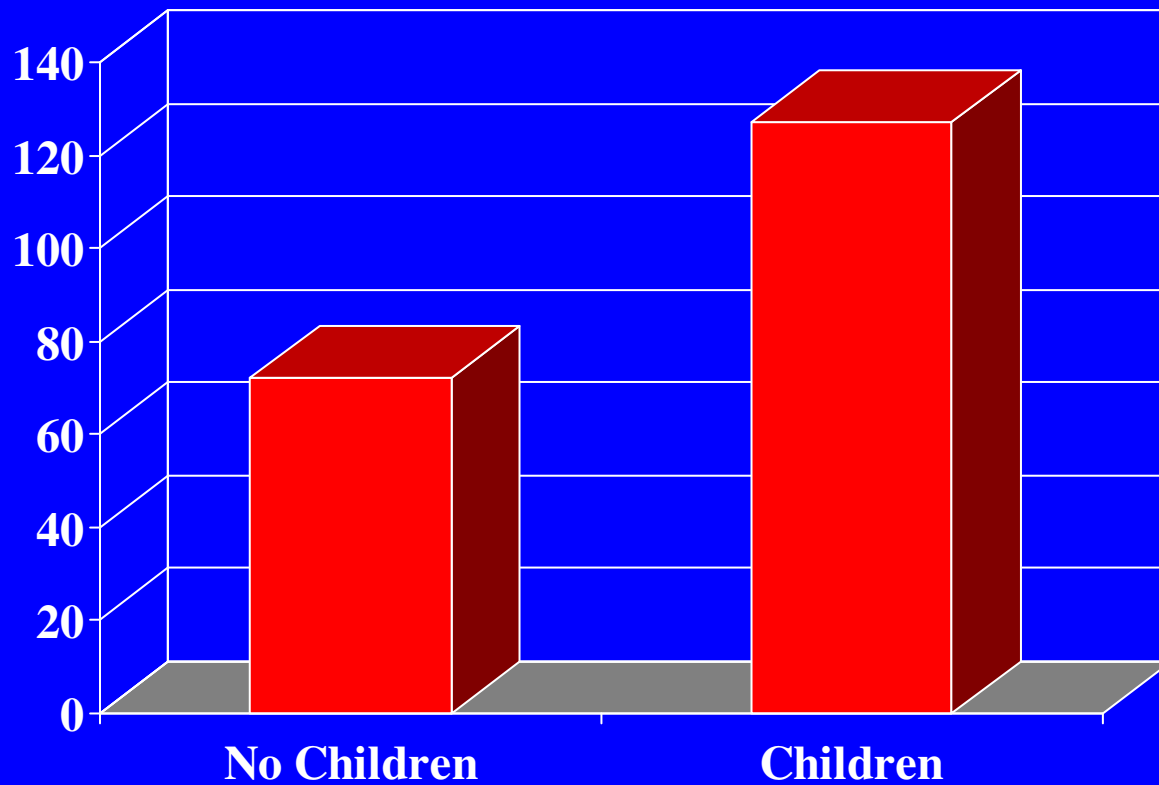
Lack of opportunity?: Occupation



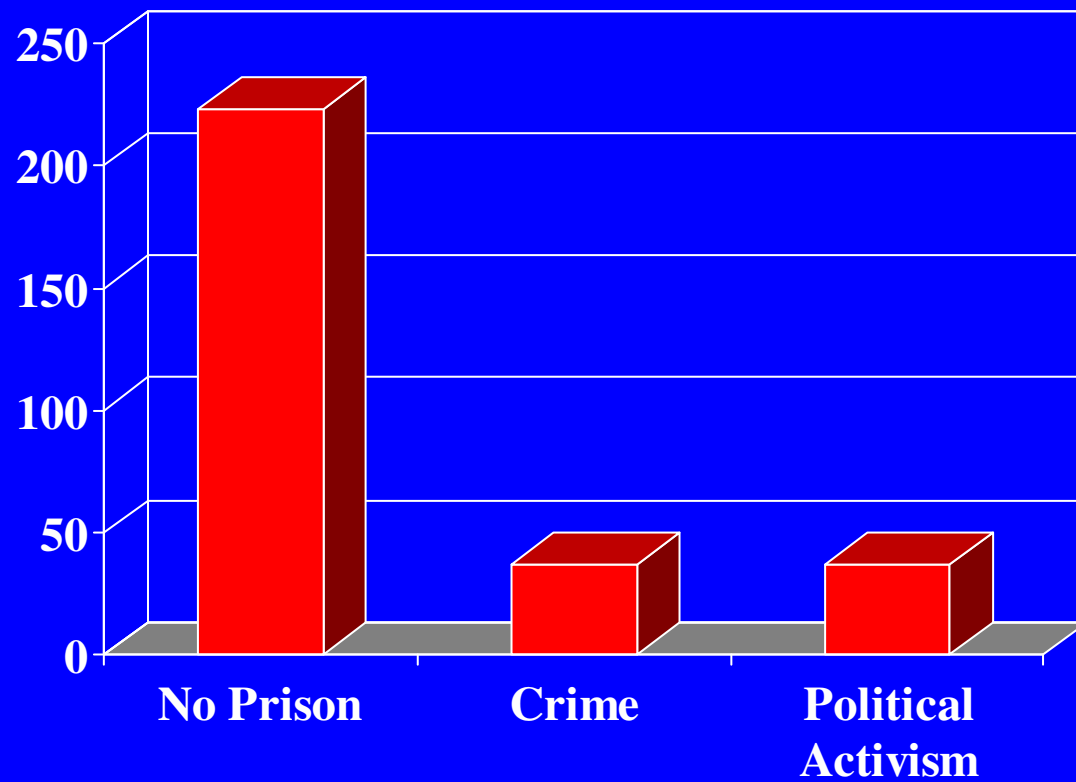
No sex?: Marital status



No responsibility?: Family status



Just bad?: Criminal background



Criminal Background

- Vast Majority: no crime
- Some major crime
 - Robbery & Drugs
- Petty crime: Maghreb logistic cells
 - Credit card fraud, false documents, insurance fraud
 - Drug traffic (more common now)
- Rare ASPD

Simply mad?: Mental health

- Very little evidence of mental illness
- Very little evidence of personality disorder
 - No narcissism (willingness to sacrifice for the comrade & cause)
 - Very little trauma in family studied: usually overprotected youths
- Overall, “good kids,” except second generation Maghreb Arabs, who lived life of petty crime

Becoming a Terrorist

- Radicalization
- Mobilization
- Evolution of the threat

Radicalization

- Path to political violence
- Dynamics
 - Young men chasing thrills, fantasies of glory and sense of belonging to group and cause
 - Bottom up process
- Four major factors
 - Sense of moral outrage
 - Specific interpretation
 - Resonance with personal experience
 - Mobilization through networks

Moral outrage

- Major moral violation
 - Anger
- Global
 - Now Iraq
- Local
 - Local police activity
- Activation of Muslim identity
 - Global & local reinforce each other

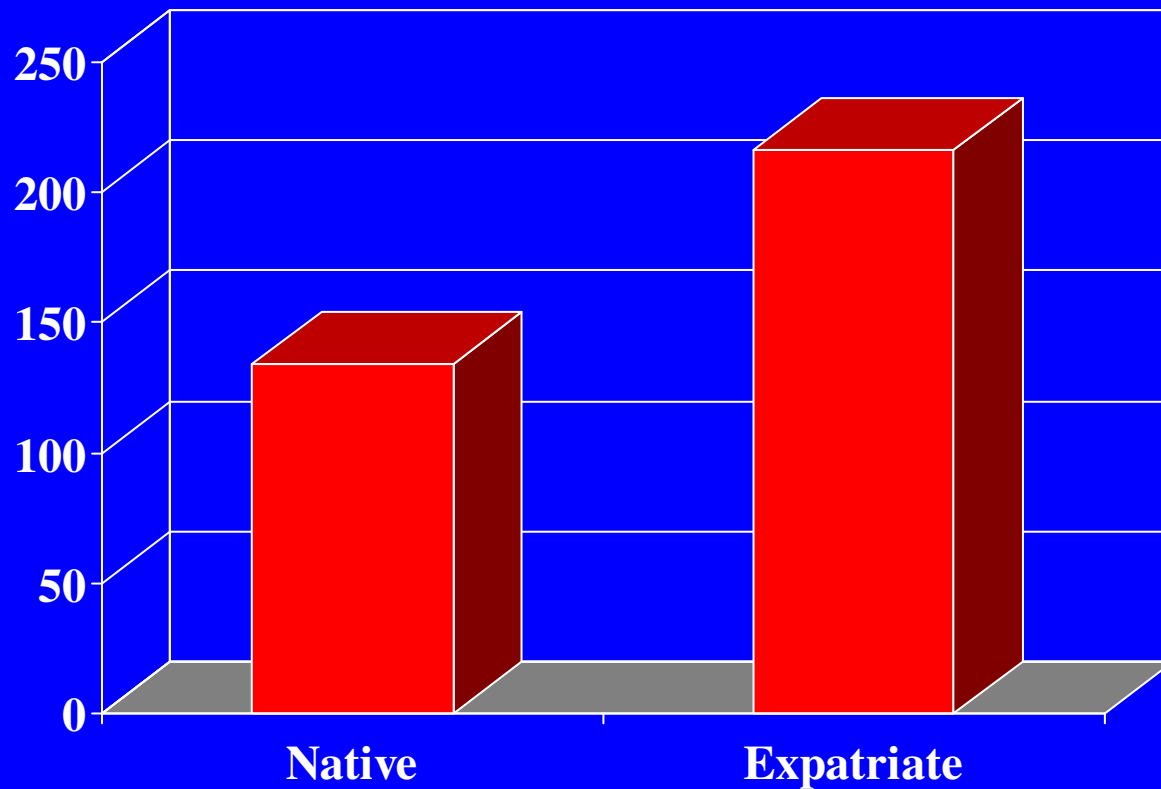
Interpretation

- War against Islam
 - Anti-Americanism & Anti-Semitism
 - NOT intellectual or Islamic scholars: attracted to sound bite Islam
- Consistency with imbedded in cultural beliefs
 - National myths
 - “Melting pot” v. “national essence”
 - American Dream
 - Equal opportunity v. economic exclusion
- Religious differences
 - Tolerance for religious fundamentalism
 - Supply side dominated by Saudis: Salafi fundamentalism

Resonance w/ personal experiences

- Personal grievances (“root causes”)
- Historical legacy
- Socio-economic conditions
 - Unskilled labor v. middle class professionals
 - Labor markets
- Political contribution
 - Welfare policies (idleness & boredom)
 - Failure of top down policies
 - Xenophobic backlash
- EUR v. US differences:
 - 2,400 v. 60 arrested for terrorism related charges

Place where they joined jihad



Forming networks of trust

- Diaspora phenomenon: > 80%
 - 2nd /3rd generation + young expatriates
- Friendship (pre-existing): ~ 70%
- Kinship: ~ 20%
- Spontaneous, self-organized bunches of guys (networks of trust) from the bottom up
 - Self selection and Mutual self-recruitment

Expatriate Trajectory

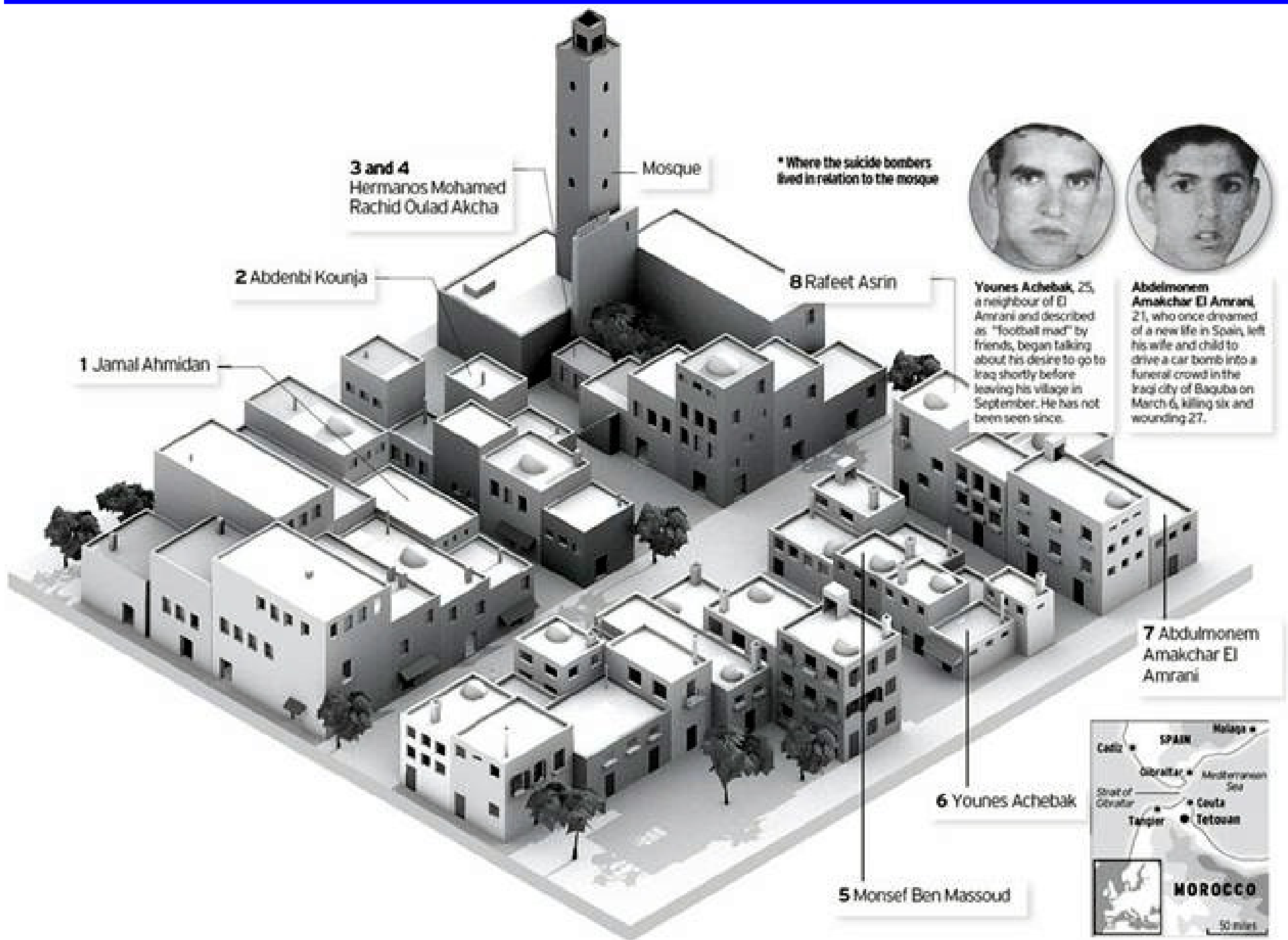
- Upwardly & geographically mobile (“best & brightest”)
 - Religious, caring & middle class families
 - Global citizens: 3 or 4 languages, skilled in IT
- Sent to university in the West
 - Separated from traditional bonds & culture
 - Homesick, lonely, marginalized & excluded from society
 - Adopt Western lifestyle, without relief
- Seek friends
 - Drift to mosques for companionship, not religion
 - Move in together (halal food), formed cliques

Homegrown Trajectory

- Raised in host country:
 - 2nd /3rd generation & young migrants
 - But ideology is foreign
- Upwardly mobile, & secular background
- Discriminated by & excluded from society
 - Drop out of school
 - Turn to petty crime & drugs
 - Form gangs
 - Resentful & reactive activation of collective identity
- Collectively drift to religion to escape situation

Mobilization through networks

- Face to face: local homogeneity but global heterogeneity
 - Neighborhood gangs (homegrown)
 - Student activities (both expatriate & homegrown)
 - Radical study groups (12 → about half of sample)
- Gradual shift to online networks: no space or time limits
 - Transformation of the threat: teenagers, women, egalitarian
 - Importance of chat-rooms: virtual “invisible hand”: C2 function
- Group dynamics: increased commitment via interactivity
 - Groups act as “echo chamber” encouraging mutual escalation
 - For cause (script → role models) & comrades (collective identity)
 - Gradual slide into violence: in-group love & out-group hate



3 and 4
Hermanos Mohamed
Rachid Oulad Akcha

Mosque

* Where the suicide bombers
lived in relation to the mosque



2 Abdenbi Kourja

8 Rafeet Asrin

Younes Achebak, 25,
a neighbour of El
Amrani and described
as "football mad" by
friends, began talking
about his desire to go to
Iraq shortly before
leaving his village in
September. He has not
been seen since.

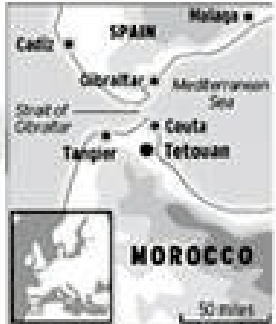
Abdelmonem
Amakchar El Amrani,
21, who once dreamed
of a new life in Spain, left
his wife and child to
drive a car bomb into a
funeral crowd in the
Iraqi city of Bagdada on
March 6, killing six and
wounding 27.

1 Jamal Ahmiclan

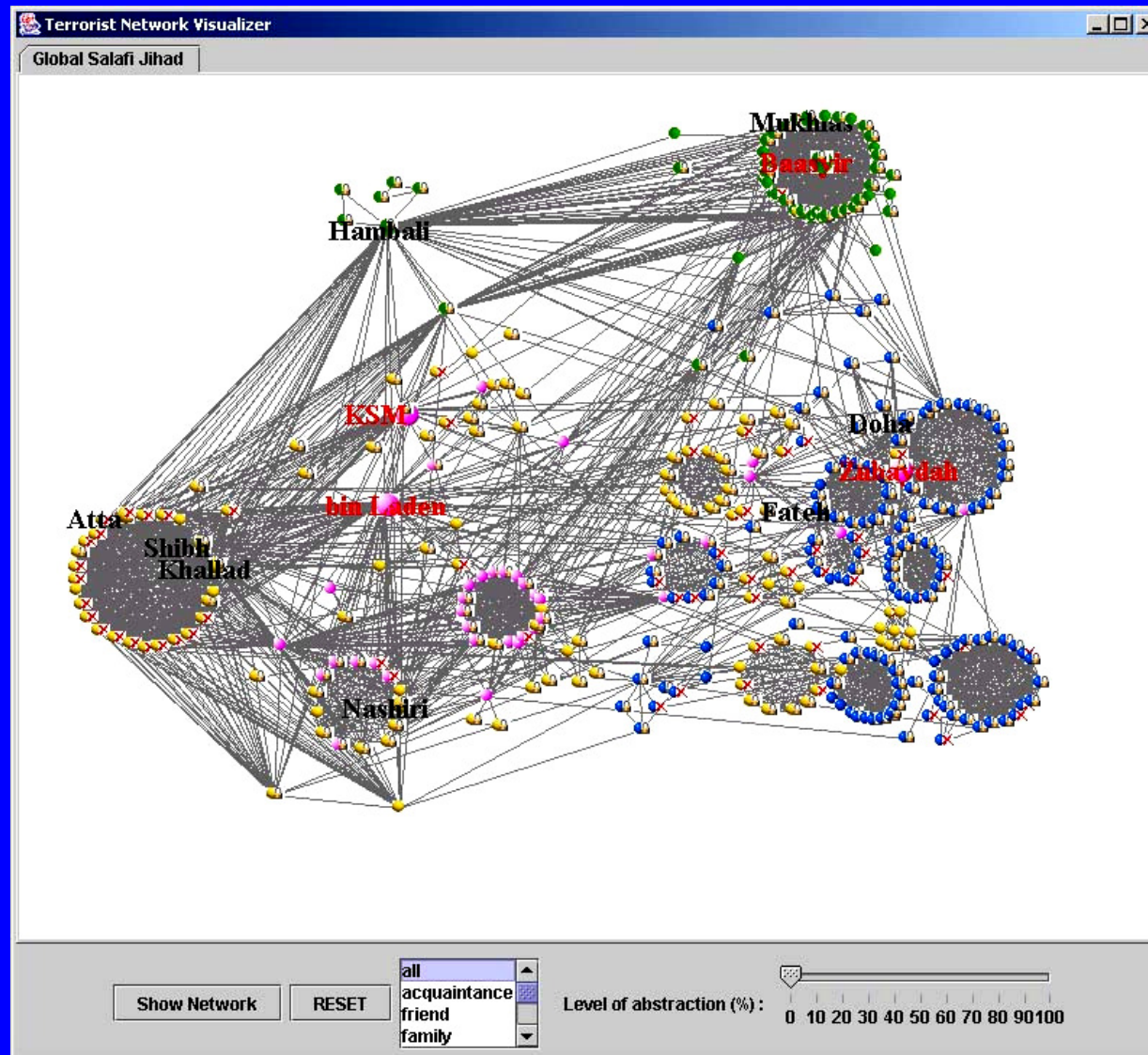
7 Abdulmonem
Amakchar El
Amrani

6 Younes Achebak

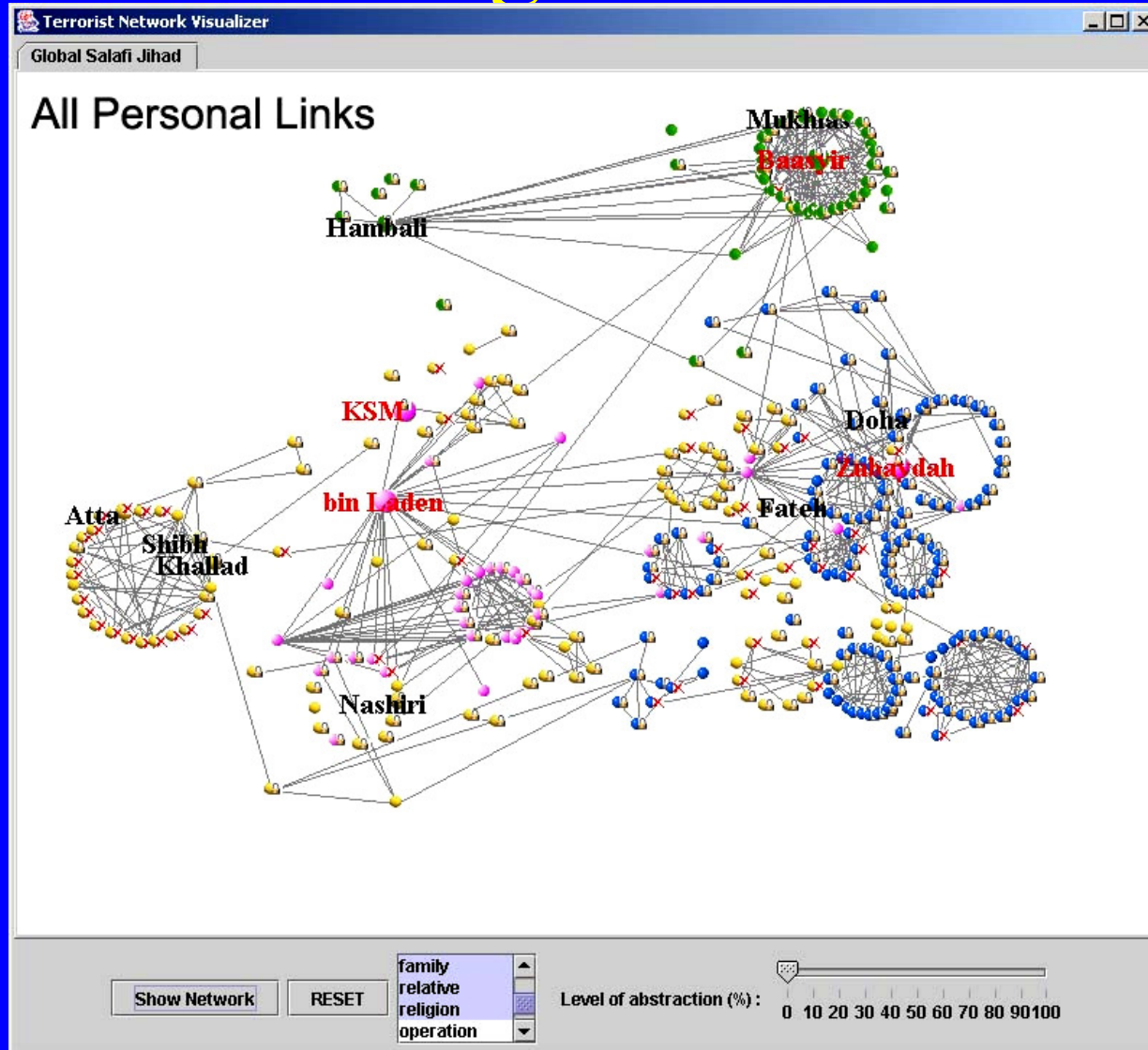
5 Monsef Ben Massoud



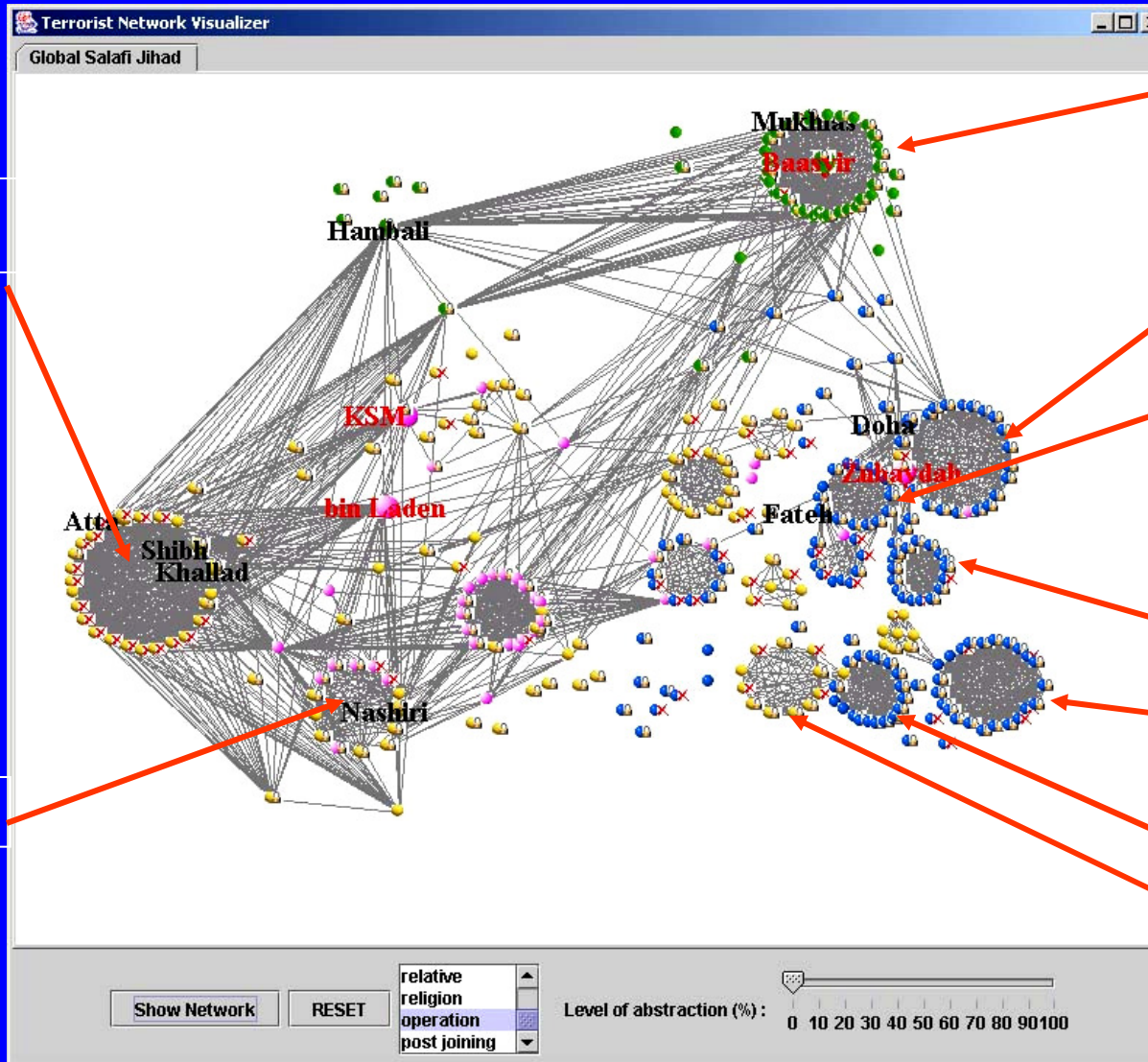
The Network



Pre-existing social bonds



Operational Links



9/11/01

Emb, 1998

Bali, 2002
Jakarta, 2003
Singapore Plot, 2001

Strasbourg, 1999

LAX, 1999

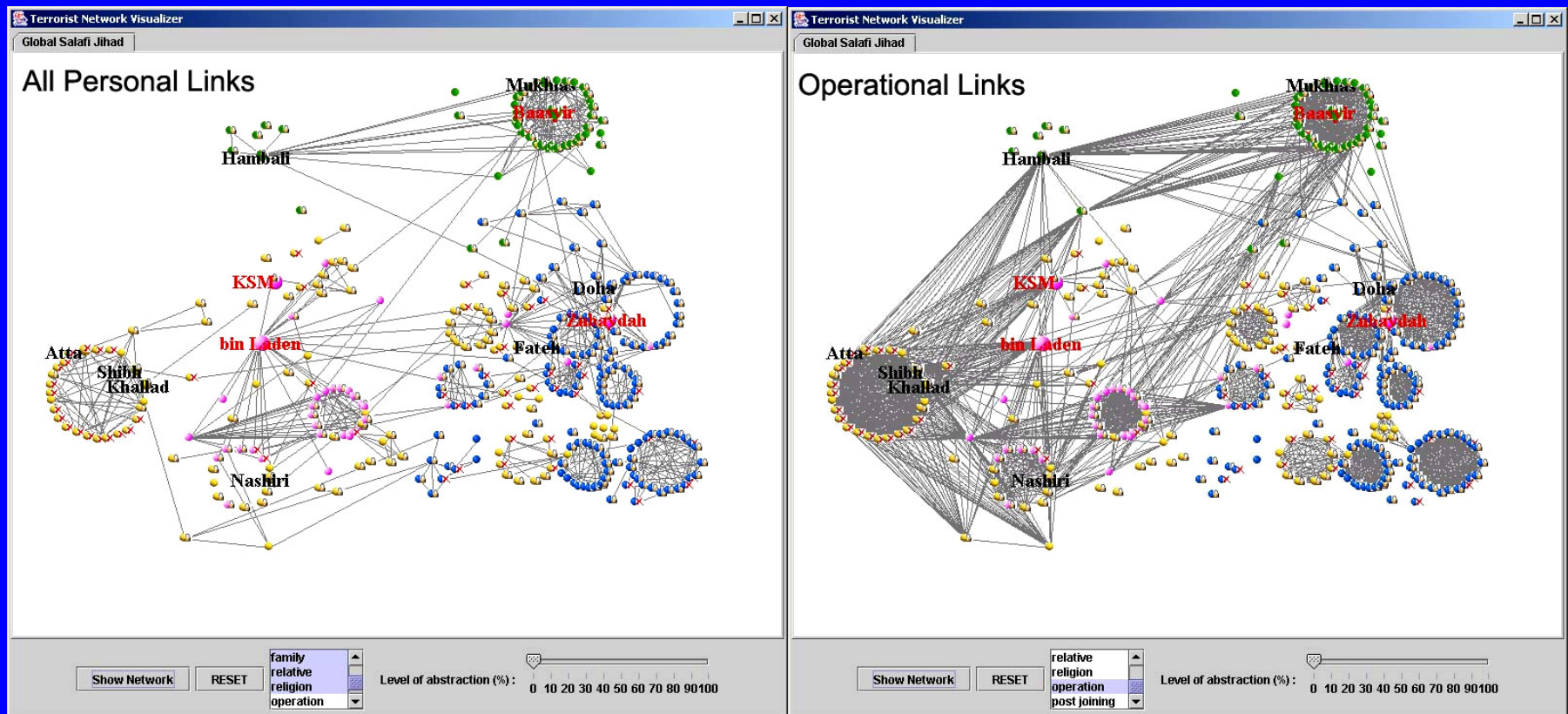
France, 1995

Casablanca, 2003

Morocco, 1994

Istanbul, 2003

Personal v Operational Links



Evolution of global Islamist terror

- 1st wave: Companions of UBL: 1980s
 - Afghan Arabs
 - Well educated, Egyptian predominance, average age 30
 - Al Qaeda Central leadership (dozens left)
- 2nd wave: Trained terrorists: 1990s to 9/11/01
 - Trained in Afghanistan
 - Fairly well educated, expatriate dominance, average age 25
 - Al Qaeda Central (hundred)
- Transition phase: 9/11/01 to 3/03
- 3rd wave: Terrorist Wannabes: Post-Iraq generation
 - No longer linked to aQ: not trained (except Brits)
 - Poorly educated, homegrown dominance, average age 20
 - Potentially thousands

3rd Wave: Leaderless Jihad

- Darwinian structural evolution of process of radicalization in a hostile habitat, but enabled by the Internet
- Evolved organically into survival mode
 - Internet redundancy & anonymity: survival despite hostile habitat
 - Europe vulnerable: culture, social conditions & offline networks
- Self-limiting threat:
 - Generational self definition in contrast to previous one
 - Inability to impose discipline (C2) on wannabes
 - No long term goals & strategy
 - Inability to progress into offline political party (vulnerable target)
 - Appeal is self-limiting
 - End-state unattractive (Taliban)
 - No incentive to compromise, constant push by new hothead → escalation of atrocities & loss of appeal