Hot Topics & Hot Spots
Exploring Global Challenges
GlobalScope Publications
University of California, Irvine • School of Social Sciences

GlobalScope is a series of innovative curriculum guides created by the University of California, Irvine’s School of Social Sciences for secondary school educators and students on the 21st Century forces and issues of globalization. The curriculum is designed to introduce high school students to the formal academic disciplines of anthropology, economics, geography, international studies, political science, and sociology. The GlobalScope publications allow us to share original University research and teachings with students and teachers beyond our immediate reach.

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Introducing Global Connect @ UCI

Global Connect @ UCI is an original educational partnership developed by the University of California, Irvine’s School of Social Sciences to enrich California’s secondary school curriculum in international studies. This is accomplished by translating current university-level concepts and knowledge into a curriculum that is age appropriate for high school students.

The global studies knowledge gap in our public schools is a critical problem that needs a flexible and immediate response. Students need lessons they can relate to as global citizens that will affect how they see themselves in the world. They must be capable of thinking in terms of worldwide issues to succeed in their respective careers and lives so that they may contribute to the general welfare of society. This cannot be achieved through textbook curriculum that is outdated by the time it is received by students. Teachers cannot abandon their classroom responsibilities to acquire current knowledge of the quickly changing international environment. Global conflicts and issues need to be brought to the students as current events – not as history.

The study of worldwide issues through Global Connect establishes an environment that creates responsible global citizens and leads to access for students to higher education. Global Connect builds a bridge to the world for our nation’s secondary students.

Global Connect dedicates its educational program and publications to addressing California’s History Social Studies curriculum framework and the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies. This is being accomplished through the creation of an original year long course, “Globalization and International Relations”; implementation of the syllabus at select schools in Orange County; sponsorship of countywide teacher seminars; and the development of new on-line curriculum options for secondary educators statewide and beyond. Classroom lessons are innovative in structure and not only teach students factual information but serve as an ideal platform for analytical and reflective thinking about global issues.

For additional information, please visit our website at: http://www.socsci.uci.edu/globalconnect/
Common Core Standards in the Social Sciences

The pursuit of Common Core Standards is redefining America’s educational priorities. One of the most central and elusive problems in addressing these standards is developing academically challenging and classroom effective curriculum that addresses the needs of our students in different subject areas. Global Connect @ UCI, a unique educational initiative based in the School of Social Sciences at the University of California, Irvine, has developed original curriculum and teaching strategies to introduce secondary students to 21st Century global issues and events through an interdisciplinary lens. The lens integrates the various disciplines within social science: anthropology, economics, geography, international studies, political science, and sociology.

This integration occurs through concepts, readings, and “problem sets” found in contemporary university classrooms. Our academically centered course of study has been adapted into age appropriate thematic presentations, dynamic interactive, and literacy building workshops that realize the Common Core objectives.

Global Connect specifically targets and meets the Common Core Standards by:

- **Focusing on non-fiction, discipline based content through formal academic PowerPoint presentations, interactive workshops, and readings**
- **Emphasizing Evidence Based Writing Skills through the introduction of take-home assignments, and unit capstone projects, and formal academic forms of in-class writing**
- **Building a discipline-based vocabulary (a set of new terms are defined to complement each week’s academic theme)**
- **Expanding the students’ abilities to: Use quality academic sources, organize data, analyze, and cite & discuss**
- **Integrating contemporary use of technology for online research and general inquiry**

The Global Connect course on “Globalization and International Relations” is already serving as a Common Core option for secondary educators and students in California’s Saddleback Valley Unified School District and Newport-Mesa Unified School District. The partnership between UCI, SVUSD, and NMUSD is currently exploring new strategies for sharing and advancing this dynamic new course so that other districts can adopt this as a vehicle for acquiring college ready critical thinking abilities and organizational skills. These strategies include the creation of effective teacher training modules for each unit; an expanded online topic-specific video library of presentations by UCI faculty and graduate students; and the continued development of *GlobalScope Curriculum Guides*. 
This year, as with prior years, the content has been revised and edited to address the most recent global occurrences/issues and to introduce new resources. For an in-depth overview of our Program, please visit our website at: www.socsci.uci.edu/globalconnect.

Ellen Schlosser

Ellen Schlosser
Global Connect @ UCI
Founding Director
Curriculum Development Advisor

Note:
In 2011, the University of California recognized Global Connect’s course, “Globalization and International Relations,” as an approved A-G academic elective course for California’s secondary students. The California Council for the Social Sciences recognized the program as being a Common Core ready curriculum and featured the program in their journal, Sunburst: A Publication of the California Council for the Social Studies.
GUIDELINE TO GLOBALSCOPE

GlobalScope is an expanding library of in-print and online guides that mirror UCI School of Social Sciences’ contemporary research and teachings related to 21st Century issues and conditions of globalization. The primary motivation behind this publication is to provide secondary teachers with an accessible social science resource that will help create “global” windows in the classroom. Our guiding principle is that high school students need to understand the contemporary changes that are influencing their educational and personal opportunities, and ultimately, their lives and careers.

Explanation of GlobalScope format:

Unit Presentations vary in format. Each presentation is centered on a specific topic and reflects the style of the individual faculty, graduate, or undergraduate student presenter. Several of the authors have created PowerPoint presentations that can be used by the classroom teacher. An annotated version with additional information has been included in the Teacher Edition. Some presenters have also provided lesson outlines.

Workshop Scripts seek to recreate the lecture/discussion format used in college courses. We alternate the formal introduction of topics with special interactive workshops. These age-appropriate workshops have been designed and successfully presented in the classrooms (grades 8 – 12) by Global Connect undergraduate interns. These workshops have been designed in a script-like manner with sections assigned to the university undergraduate interns. The workshop material can easily be adapted for “single voice” use by the classroom teacher.

Literacy Building Readings and Assignments provide students with exercises that will require them to read non-fiction primary source documents. After reading and analyzing the materials, the students will be given written assignments to strengthen their expository writing abilities. Some current topical articles and charts have been reprinted and cited.

Global Perspectives: International Relations & Globalization Course Workbook is a two-part workbook to be used in conjunction with the thematic module presentations throughout the semester.
Part I: “A Sense of Place: Identifying Nations by Name and Location” includes weekly political map identification exercises that provide students with the ability to recognize the location of the globe’s nations. These weekly exercises will allow students to locate and name the nations of each continent and significant regions.

Part II: “People of Purpose: 21st Century Global Citizens (‘Real Heroes’)” will introduce students to real heroes whose actions have impacted the distinct geographic areas being studied. These introductions will be made through video interviews/feature stories and assigned readings. Students will be asked to analyze the problems, strategies, and solutions associated with each of the featured social entrepreneurs through writing exercises. Over the semester the assignments will transition students from completing simple fill-in review sheets to composing five paragraph expository essays. The writing assignments, depending on length, can be used as in-class worksheets or as take home assignments. Grading of these assignments is recommended.

Identification of Curriculum Standards:

Each workshop and presentation addresses an objective identified in the National Council for the Social Studies Curriculum Thematic Strands and/or the objectives set forth by the California State History/Social Science Standards & Framework. For your personal reference, we have included a copy of the National Council’s Thematic Strands in the Appendix.

Complimentary Disk: All of the primary GlobalScope materials presented in this curriculum guide are provided on a disk so that classroom teachers can independently present the PowerPoint presentations and reproduce the worksheet assignments.

All the original materials are for individual classroom use only and not to be reprinted without express permission from the School of Social Sciences, University of California, Irvine.

Website: All materials contained in GlobalScope will be posted on the Global Connect @ UCI website: http://www.socsci.uci.edu/globalconnect
**Hot Topics & Hot Spots**

*Hot Topics & Hot Spots: Exploring Global Challenges* provides students with the opportunity to apply their newly acquired knowledge of geopolitical terms and concepts (nation-states, foreign policy, infrastructure, human rights, fragile states, etc.) to some of the critical issues and events we are facing today.

The reinforcement of classroom knowledge is best served when the students gain valuable insights about the realities of their world. With this goal in mind, this edition will center on the following inquiries:

- **What events and issues during the first years of the century have cast a shadow over the world in 2016?**
- **What extremist group is currently threatening to reconfigure the nation-states of the Middle East and challenge security in Western nations?**
- **Case Study: ISIS – What does this extremist group stand for? Where are they conducting their war? Who are the members and followers of ISIS? How are the world powers responding to their threats? What military actions are being implemented to combat ISIS? How does ISIS use contemporary social media to recruit new members and to spread their threats of intimidation?**
- **Case Study: Refugee Crisis – What global crises have created a historic number of refugees? What nations are they fleeing? Which nations have kept their borders closed? What are the long-term needs of the refugees?**

In addition to Global Connect’s regular pattern of subject specific PowerPoint presentations and workshops, *Hot Topics & Hot Spots* will introduce students to the year-end capstone project related to the 2016 Building Global Bridges Symposium. The Symposium challenges will be presented during class instruction and students will be able to select their preferred project. Students will then independently complete their Symposium submissions.

Undergraduates Mark Barcelona, Aliza Asad, Raman Kaur, Negin Fatahi, Shannen Dilag, Tyler McCray, Stacy Peralta, Elaine Tang, Cristian Cardona, and alumnus Sunny Thai served on the think-tank curriculum team that developed the new themes and format of *Hot Topics & Hot Spots: Exploring Global Challenges*. UCI School of Social Sciences’ Professor of Political Science Caesar Sereseres generously served as the academic advisor on the topics of terrorism and the ISIS extremists.
On behalf of the Global Connect team and the editorial staff of GlobalScope, I hope that you find this publication a valuable educational resource. We would sincerely appreciate your insights regarding future themes and effective techniques that we can incorporate in our workshop materials. Please forward your suggestions to Ellen Schlosser at edschlos@uci.edu.
GLOBAL CONNECT VISIONARIES

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Manuel Gomez, Former Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs

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Bill Maurer, Dean of Social Sciences
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Caesar D. Sereseres, Professor of Political Science
Mark Pettraca, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies
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Nurudeen Alao, Professor of Geography

NEWPORT-MESA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEWPORT HARBOR HIGH SCHOOL

Principal Sean Boulton
Host Teachers: Jennifer Thompson & Evan Chalmers

SADDLEBACK VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

LAGUNA HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

Principal Bill Hinds
Vice Principal Tricia Osborne
Host Teachers: Yoleisy Avila & Paul Weinberger

MISSION VIEJO HIGH SCHOOL

Principal Ray Gatfield
Vice Principal Dan Sullivan
Host Teacher: Chris Ashbach

EL TORO HIGH SCHOOL

Principal Terri Gusiff
Vice Principal Dan Bode
Host Teacher: Stacey Arroyo
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Jessica Chan
Director, Global Connect @ UCI

Ellen Schlosser
Curriculum Development Advisor, GlobalScope Curriculum Guides

UNDERGRADUATE EDITORS

Vincent Tong
Informatics

Tiffany Tan
Sociology & Public Health Policy

Shannen Dilag
Political Science & History

UNDERGRADUATE & ALUMNI STUDENT CONTRIBUTORS

Mark Barcelona, Political Science & History
Aliza Asad, International Studies & Public Health Policy
   Raman Kaur, Political Science
   Negin Fatahi, Political Science
Tyler McCray, International Studies
Stacy Peralta, International Studies
Elaine Tang, International Studies
Cristian Cardona, Spanish
Sunny Thai, Political Science, Sociology & Educational Sciences, 2015
# GlobalScope

## Hot Topics & Hot Spots

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BBC Iraq War Coverage - Airstrikes Begin  
http://youtu.be/LmDyO1ChS3c?t=28s  
Great Reset: How Great Recession Changed Habits  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_eJnF-1WBA  
The Arab Spring – What Is It?  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2z-rKJTiwDs  
Japanese Earthquake Aftermath  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=44VapEkO7uw |
| Unit I | The European Refugee Crisis and Syria Explained  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvOnXh3NN9w |
| Lecture: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) |  
Iraq Explained -- ISIS, Syria and War  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQPIREDW-Ro  
Homeland Security is Monitoring Suspected Members of ISIS in America - Brigitte Gabrielle  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RxsLwJLCZM  
Who Supports ISIS?  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pA7WyupD7Q0  
Obama ISIS Speech on 9/10/14: The Strategy Against ISIS | The New York Times  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tk5Spso27A |
**Workshop: ISIS Propaganda War**

From ISIS to the Islamic State: Inside the Caliphate (Trailer)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xgzQ-rDbM-Q

A Canadian's Pitch for ISIS

Not in my Name – Muslims against ISIS
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hAxIOC8Zisc

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**Lecture: The Great Exodus: Refugee Crisis 2015-2016**

Global Refugee Trends 2013 - June 2014
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ClL1mQv4vm8

Syrian refugees: Which countries welcome them, which ones don't:

Syrian Refugees: Crossing The Border To Jordan:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZoSgBM2yMtY

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**Unit II**

Why Is Germany Taking In So Many Refugees?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clvRTmheCkI

'You Are Home': Canada's Justin Trudeau Welcomes Syrian Refugees
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9_zWhkS4oQ

Japan becomes first Asian country to resettle refugees
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCbU_vbAN84

People of Nowhere
https://vimeo.com/144857118
HOT TOPICS & HOT SPOTS

A Close-Up on ISIS
What are HOTSPOTS and HOT TOPICS?

- HOT TOPICS:
  Headline news related to events, issues, and people that have the potential to harm the well being of nation-states, individuals, and select groups.

- HOTSPOTS:
  Areas of political, military, or civil unrest usually considered dangerous.

Where did each headline take place?

HOTSPOTS

- The Council on Foreign Relations maintains a world map highlighting current global conflict hotspots at:
HOT TOPICS of the 21st Century

2000
- Start of the Millennium Development Goals
- 9/11 Terrorist Attacks & Axis of Evil
- Smartphone Revolution & Start of Great Recession

2001
- War in Iraq
- War in Afghanistan

2002
- Hurricane Katrina

2003
- War in Afghanistan

2004
- Smartphone Revolution & Start of Great Recession

2007
- Smartphone Revolution & Start of Great Recession

2009
- Official end of the Great Recession
- Japanese Earthquake, Tsunami, and nuclear reactors

2011
- Tunisian riots initiate the Arab Spring
- Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines

2012
- Panic of Ebola

2013
- Impact of ISIS
- Libyan Civil War
- Syrian Civil War
- Refugees Crisis
- Earthquake in Nepal
- Zika Virus Outbreak

2014
- Impact of ISIS
- Russian invasion of Ukraine

2015
- Refugee Crisis
- Zika Virus Outbreak
What is ISIS?

- ISIS is an extremist Islamic organization based primarily in northern Syria and Iraq.
- Other names for ISIS are ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) and Daesh.
- This group has been given the title of “terrorist organization” by the United Nations, EU, the United States, Saudi Arabia and many others.
- One of the most sophisticated terrorist organizations in history
- “State-like” (has territory), hierarchical, resource heavy
- Technology and internet-based outreach

A Brief History

- Foundation from frustration and lack of stability in the Middle East
- Resentment towards the West
- ISIS split from Al Qaeda
- Al Qaeda refrains from supporting ISIS and even calls them “too extreme” for their (Al Qaeda’s) own interests.
- Current leader: Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (assumed leadership in 2010)
- Under his leadership, ISIS experienced most of its expansion.
- Organizes large scale operations, including suicide attacks and car bombings.
- Considers himself as a religious leader and follows Sharia law.
- According to US Dept. of Defense, he was held in Camp Bucca along with other future leaders of ISIS.

Where is ISIS located?

- ISIS control
- ISIS free to operate
- Kurdistan Government administered

Foundation and Leadership

- Primarily members come from the Middle East, but there are members from other nations, most notably Western nations, that join ISIS as well.
- According to the June 2014 edition of The Economist, ISIS has 6000 fighters in Iraq and around 3000-5000 fighters in Syria. About 3000 of these fighters come from abroad (500 fighters from European nations such as France and England).
- Why is having foreign fighters significant?

Members

- Other terrorist organizations team up with ISIS
- Why should we care about other terrorist organizations using ISIS as a ground for expansion?
- ISIS affects more than just Iraq and Syria:
- EX: PARIS ATTACKS
- Consequences for refugees coming from Iraq and Syria
- States highly concerned about security
Ideology

- Sunni vs. Shia
- ISIS wants to go back to the "pure" version of Islam practiced by the Ottoman Empire (before it was taken over by European influences)
- ISIS as nation without a state
  - Goal: to create separate state for Sunnis in Iraq and Syria
  - Reach as many people as possible
- Does ISIS use religion as a tool to further their own aims?
- THE MAJORITY OF MUSLIMS (MORE THAN 80%) DO NOT CONSIDER ISIS AS FOLLOWING THE RULES OF ISLAM

Power Base and Outreach

- Much of ISIS revenue comes from taxing people living in its own territories
- Oil
  - Syria oil reserve: Al- Omar
  - Attempts by Russia and the United States to bomb ISIS oil reserves to cut off funding for ISIS
  - ISIS had to reduce income for its fighters by 50% in January, 2016
- Sources of Recruitment
  - Social Media Outreach
    - Why would people even want to join?
    - Why is using social media an intelligent tactic for ISIS?

International Response to ISIS

- President Obama calls for firm stance against ISIS
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=85S9xOZ7A
- President of France, Francois Hollande declares that France is at war with ISIS
- Bringing nations together against a common enemy:
  - EX: Russia and the United States work together to draft a UN resolution to end ISIS funding
- ISIS threat to primarily focused in Syria, Iraq, and Jordan (refugees). In fact, it has explicitly threatened other nations.
- Threat to security, economic markets (oil prices), and political stability in the Middle East
- Is ISIS a threat to US domestic affairs?

Any questions?
Key Terms

1. **ISIS**: The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria is an extremist Islamic organization based primarily in northern Syria and Iraq.

2. **Al Qaeda**: An international terrorist group dedicated to opposing non-Islamic governments with force and violence. It was founded in approximately 1989 by Osama bin Laden and several others.

3. **Sunni**: A major branch of Islam, in which the initial followers believed that the community should choose the leader from the elites who were closest to the Prophet Mohammed.

4. **Shia**: The second major branch of Islam, in which the initial followers believed that the leadership of the community should stay within the family of the Prophet Mohammed.
Objective(s):
- To expose students to the manner in which ISIS uses modern media to gain recognition and recruit new members
- To portray the many ways in which modern media is used as high-tech warfare

Outline:
I. ISIS Propaganda War [15 min]
II. ISIS Social Media, Online Magazine, Videos [15 min]
III. Media Tool Presentations [15 min]

Materials:
- ISIS Propaganda War PowerPoint
- Worksheet: ISIS: Media Tools

Key to Script:
- Italicized words indicate role/action.
- Bolded sentences are questions to be posed to class.
- Normal print indicates words to be spoken aloud.
Workshop Script:

Part I: ISIS Propaganda War

Site Supervisor:
- Social media has become a significant part of everyday life, and companies have come to embrace it as part of their standard marketing strategy. Because of social media, you are very aware of when the new iPhone comes out, the new restaurant in the area, and the latest video game release. However, it is important to identify organizations that use social media to further nefarious aims.
- ISIS uses social media to further their purposes whether it be promotion, recruitment, or awareness.

Intern A:
- Present “ISIS Propaganda War PowerPoint”.

Part II: ISIS Social Media, Online Magazine, Videos

Intern B:
- We are going to further explore the tools ISIS utilizes in their marketing strategy: social media, online magazines, and videos.
- Split the class into three groups and assign each team one of three articles related to each tool.
- Have the groups complete the “ISIS: Media Tools Worksheet” and prepare to present findings to the class.

Part III: Media Tool Presentations

Intern C:
- Have two representatives from each group present worksheet answers in front of class.
- Hold a class discussion after presentations.
  - What are advantages of using social media as a marketing strategy? For the company/organization? For the consumer?
  - What are some disadvantages of using social media as a marketing strategy?
  - Do you always trust what you hear in advertising or on the internet?
USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

In order to reach its audience, ISIS uses different social media tools:
1. Social Networking Websites
2. Online Magazine
3. Videos

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (TWITTER)

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (MEMES)

ONLINE MAGAZINE

ONLINE MAGAZINE

It is sophisticated, slick, beautifully produced and printed in several languages including English.
A STANCE AGAINST ISIS

#not in my name
Each group will be responsible for answering the following questions from the assigned article.

1. Give a brief summary of the media tool used by ISIS in your article.

2. What are the primary objectives of using this media tool? Explain your answer using direct examples from the article.

3. What is the target audience that ISIS is trying to reach?
4. What advanced strategies are being used with regards to this particular media tool?

5. Are there efforts to limit ISIS’s use of the specific media tool? If yes, what is being done?

6. In your opinion, how can we put an end to ISIS’s use of modern media to advance their goals?
ISIS is Using Social Media to Reach YOU, Its New Audience

The most bloodthirsty terrorist group in memory is also a canny manipulator of social media. It seeks to frighten and inspire.

By Jacob Siegel, Published: August 31, 2014

The migration from Internet chat forums to social media platforms came late to jihadists, but they’ve adapted skillfully. A strategy developed over years has evolved into a sophisticated campaign and now, at the center of the world’s attention, ISIS is using its skill to communicate directly to an American audience.

The filmed execution of James Foley was the first time most Americans saw ISIS address them but the group has been targeting Westerners for months. “The first big turning point was Mosul,” said Emerson Brooking, a research associate at the Council on Foreign Relations, referring to ISIS’s capture of the city in early June. “ISIS put a lot of pre-planning into the social media arm of this offensive, and the effort paid off.” After Mosul, Brooking said, “You see a significant spike in English-language videos and images.”

If it could take Mosul, ISIS knew it would have the world’s attention and had planned what it wanted to say. The rehearsal for the global audience came earlier, in Syria’s civil war, where ISIS refined its approach to messaging online.

Starting in Iraq and later spreading to Syria after entering the war there in 2013, ISIS used social media to publicize its campaign of slaughter and threaten its enemies. The group’s military prowess was enhanced by its reputation for brutality, spread by its own media efforts, which weakened its enemies resistance and led some to flee from battle. On Twitter and in Facebook pages ISIS was making appeals as well as threats, attracting recruits and soliciting funding online.

This was actually an old tactic adopted to new technology. During the U.S. war in Iraq, when ISIS, in an earlier incarnation, was known as al Qaeda in Iraq, the group learned “how to engage a U.S. audience and get at them,” according to Clint Watts a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute. The difference now is that ISIS no longer depends on intermediaries to broadcast its barbarism. In this new environment, the group’s media arm can upload its propaganda and see it spread globally in a matter of minutes or hours.

Unlike the cloistered online forums where jihadist groups once did most of their communicating, Twitter and Facebook are both open and public by nature. That meant that as ISIS took to these platforms it became easier for any fighter on the battlefield to pose next to mutilated bodies and post images that could easily be seen by anyone following the fighting. The people who saw it most often in 2013 days were ISIS supporters, who were turned on by the savagery, and the group’s enemies, who must have feared that it could happen to them next.

In February 2014 ISIS broke with al Qaeda, largely over leadership in Syria, though partly over a dispute about how much savage violence was too much. Following the break, social media became an arena for competing claims to authority between ISIS and al Qaeda’s official affiliate in Syria, the Nusra Front. The tweeting of battlefield gore didn’t disappear, but social media also became a stage for airing accusations and debate over the schism in the Syrian jihad.
At this point ISIS’s online efforts were largely still part of an inside conversation cut off from the Western public. Most messages were directed either at other parties in Iraq and Syria or to a sympathetic audience of jihadi fanboys and potential recruits abroad.

Another tactic ISIS developed was tweeting pictures of administrative services in the areas under its control that were meant to show its ability to govern. The images of ISIS in Syria that circulated in the West documented the group’s brutality. But to a local audience it was showing both piles of corpses and its fighters passing out candy – saying effectively, that, while it turned the rest of the world into a graveyard, for the faithful life would be sweet.

Then, on June 10, after ISIS captured Mosul, its messages pivoted towards the West. The majority of the group’s posts were still in Arabic but English tweets and translated videos surged as ISIS targeted a Western audience. One meme clearly aimed to recruit young Westerners was the image of two ISIS fighters posing over a caption comparing jihad to the video game Call of Duty.

“The big difference now is that [ISIS] has its own English speakers,” said Peter Neumann, Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation at King’s College in London. “And they have their own media now where they can put this right out on Twitter and everybody can immediately see it and spread it online.”

That has meant relying on a combination of sophisticated marketing and “social-media strategies that inflate and control its message.” Those strategies having increasingly been aimed squarely at a Western audience. During the World Cup ISIS used a hashtag, #WorldCup2014, exploiting the massive soccer audience’s attention to flood the Internet with its propaganda. On Aug. 7, after President Obama authorized airstrikes in Iraq, ISIS responded with a hashtag campaign. The hashtag, #AMessageFromISIStoUS, threatening Americans with retribution for the airstrikes, was one sign that “ISIS has moved to a policy of direct and aggressive engagement via social media,” said Brooking of the Council on Foreign Relations.

More “aggressive engagement” followed. Some of it was meant to invoke the specter of ISIS as an omnipresent force, like the tweet of an ISIS flag in front of the White House. Another ISIS meme showing fighters posing with Nutella, the chocolate spread popular in Europe, was a different sort of engagement, meant to lure Westerners to the fight in Syria and Iraq.

Addressing its American audience, ISIS is actually speaking to at least two different groups. To the vast majority who are repulsed by the group it is boasting of its power and trying to make people believe that even inside America they are vulnerable. But there is a far smaller and more dangerous group that ISIS isn’t trying to scare — but inspire. ISIS wants to “keep their rhetoric out there, keep themselves visible and hope that someone acts on it for them,” said Watts of the Foreign Policy Research Institute. He believes that ISIS currently lacks the ability for a coordinated attack inside America but that they may speak to “troubled kids” who could independently, or with minimal support, “put together something like a Boston marathon kind of attack.”

Efforts to counter ISIS online presence have already begun. Twitter and Youtube have shut down accounts and removed videos. Individual users have started their own hashtags like #ISISMediaBlackout that encouraged people to post photos of James Foley’s life and work instead of spreading the video of his killing and amplifying ISIS’s message.

Most of ISIS’s Western audience is sickened by its brandishing of dismemberment and depravity — but it’s also often captivated. As ISIS’s crimes are posted and reposted, and its sinister black flag becomes a fixture of broadcast news, every new story of its fighters playing with decapitated heads becomes a challenge to tell the truth without either propagating or censoring its evil.

For more information, visit:
How ISIS conquered social media

By Mustapha Ajbaili, Published: Tuesday, June 24, 2014

After seizing swathes of land in Iraq and Syria, the Al-Qaeda-inspired Islamic State of Iraq and Syria is expanding its presence on social media, using sophisticated techniques to recruit fighters, spread its propaganda and garner financial support.

One of these techniques is a Twitter application called “Fajr al-Bashaer,” or “Dawn of Good Tidings” (@Fajr991). The application - flagged by Twitter as “potentially harmful” - requests user data and personal information. After downloading it, the app sends news and updates on ISIS fighting in Syria and Iraq.

A recent report estimates that hundreds of users have subscribed to the application on the internet or their Android smart phones using the Google Play store.

The application was first created in April, but became very active only after the jihadist group seized the northern Iraq city of Mosul two weeks ago.

In addition, Twitter accounts affiliated with ISIS are engaged in a hashtag campaign. Hundreds if not thousands of users are tweeting special hashtags, making them appear on @ActiveHashtags, a Twitter account that tweets the most trending hashtags of the day in the Arab world.

The first issue of the magazine features an interview with someone called Shaikh Abul-Hawraa’ Al-Jazaa’iri, presented as the organizer of a seminar to graduate Imams in the Syrian city of Raqqaa.

The magazine says: “Caring for the residents of Wilayat Ar-Raqqah [Province of Ar-Raqqah] is a goal of the Islamic State, and because of this, the Islamic State sought to open service all over the wilayah through an Islamic services committee comprised of multiple departments, among which is the Consumer Protection Office.”

“Our teams go out every day, split up on the streets of the city and examine the restaurants, wholesale outlets and shopping centers. We also conduct direct medical supervision of the slaughterhouses in order to ensure that they are free of any harmful substances. We will soon be holding a seminar [God willing] to teach the proper Islamic method of slaughter. We hold surprise inspections on a daily basis at varying times,” Abu Salih Al-Ansari, the head of the Consumer Protection Office, tells the magazine.

Regarding law enforcement, the magazine’s issue 2 says: “The longest we can detain someone for is one week. If their guilt can be established through primary and supportive evidence, and through witnesses, we submit the matter to the court so it can judge the case with the book of Allah. If we cannot establish the person’s guilt, we release them. If the individual is detained longer than one week, I'm required to compensate them for each additional day that they’re imprisoned.

The Islamic State Report

The jihadist group has also launched an online magazine to recruit more fighters. The 10-page magazine named “The Islamic State Report” explains how life within its envisioned Islamic state would look like.
To promote its propaganda, ISIS is also relying on advanced media production techniques, as shown in some of its high-quality videos.

In one of them, a British man identified as Abu Muthanna al-Yemeni appears flanked by two other jihadists, appealing for young Muslims in the West to join their cause in Syria and Iraq.

Western Muslims

Western Muslims are an important target of ISIS’s social media propaganda. The group ensures most of its media productions are translated into as many Western languages as possible.

This is done through sophisticated media arms such as Al-Furqan Media, Fursan Al-Balagh Media, Asawirti Media, Al-Ghuraba Media - which appears to be operated in Germany - and Al-Hayat Media Center.

The last one provides the translation of a recent speech by ISIS spokesman Abu Mohammad al-Adnani al-Shami into English, Turkish, Dutch, French, German, Indonesian and Russian.

J.M. Berger, editor of INTELWIRE.com and author of “Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam,” wrote: “ISIS does have legitimate support online - but less than it might seem. And it owes a lot of that support to a calculated campaign that would put American social-media-marketing gurus to shame.”

Peter W. Singer - director of the Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence, and a senior fellow in the Foreign Policy program - told Al Arabiya News that ISIS’s increased activity on social media “in many ways reflects the new nature of media technology’s cross with warfare.”

Singer added: “Just as the Crimea War was the first war reported by telegraph and Vietnam the first TV war, we are now seeing wars in places like Syria and Iraq, just like the broader use of media technology, playing out online.”

He said the growth of jihadist activity on social media is in line with the wider use of the virtual space by people in general. Government oversight is not “much of a deterrent in these conflict situations,” Singer added.

“You are talking about a virtual space where physical location of the sender can be everywhere from a stable state, a failed state zone (like much of Syria or Iraq now), or thousands of kilometers away,” he said.

“Small governments trying to control all the content on the Internet is like them trying to build sand castles in the desert in the midst of a wind storm,” said Singer, whose research focuses on U.S. defense needs and the future of warfare.

Vanda Felbab-Brown, senior fellow in the Foreign Policy program at the Brookings Institute, said: “There has been a lot of effort to crack down on terrorism in the cyber domain. However, it is a cat-and-mouse game, and both terrorists and criminals find a way to avoid it.”

Also, “intelligence services allow some jihadi web pages to function to get intelligence,” added Felbab-Brown, an expert in international conflicts and non-traditional security threats.

For more information, visit:
http://english.alarabiya.net/en/media/digital/2014/06/24/How-has-ISIS-conquered-social-media-.html
The Isis propaganda war: a hi-tech media jihad

Isis is using techniques plundered from movies, video games and news channels to spread its message. Who is masterminding the operation – and what is the best way to counter it?

By Steve Rose, Published: Tuesday, October 7, 2014

In 1941, Hollywood director Frank Capra was commissioned to make a series of propaganda films for the US war effort. He knew he had his work cut out: he had seen Leni Riefenstahl’s Triumph Of The Will – a staggering, state-of-the-art display of both film-making expertise and Nazi military might. “It scared the hell out of me,” Capra later said. “It fired no gun, dropped no bombs, but as a psychological weapon aimed at destroying the will to resist, it was just as lethal.” How could the Americans possibly compete? Capra’s solution was to turn the enemies’ weapons against them. His resulting seven-film documentary series, Why We Fight, repurposed footage from Triumph Of The Will and other propaganda films to show “our boys” what they were up against. He even copied Riefenstahl’s editing rhythms and rousing use of music. “Let their own films kill them,” Capra said. “Let the enemy prove to our soldiers the enormity of his cause – and the justness of ours.”

Fast forward to the present-day, and the situation seems to have been reversed. Just as Islamic State (Isis) has used captured American artillery against its enemies in Iraq, so it is using the west’s media tools and techniques against it. Isis has proved fluent in YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, internet memes (see: #catsofjihad) and other social media. Amateur videos and images are also being uploaded daily by its footsoldiers, which are then globally disseminated, both by ordinary users and mainstream news organisations hungry for images of a conflict their own cameras cannot access. A recent example was a recruitment video consisting of edited footage from Grand Theft Auto. “Your games which are producing from you, we do the same actions in the battlefields!! [sic]” proclaimed the YouTube clip, which was duly reported around the world. The current geopolitical situation in the Middle East is depressingly familiar, but Isis’s media sophistication is something new. It’s almost as if it looked at Osama bin Laden’s fuzzy, monotonous camcorder sermons of a decade ago and concluded that extremist Islam really needed a snappier marketing strategy. Isis is in competition with western news channels, Hollywood movies, reality shows, even music video, and it has adopted their vocabulary.

Isis’s global media operation appears to have two key objectives: to provoke the US and its allies, and to recruit from outside the Middle East. Both seem to be working. In the former instance, the horrific videos of the beheadings of US journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff, and aid workers David Haines and, on Friday, Alan Henning, have helped drag western powers back into combat in the region. Meanwhile, those same countries have seen their citizens departing to join Isis.

As we have seen, Foley, Sotloff and other hostages have been forced in the videos to condemn the US government’s “complacency and criminality” and to warn them not to intervene. Meanwhile British photojournalist John Cantlie is, under duress, currently presenting what looks like a mock current affairs series. The three episodes to date lay out clear, analytical arguments, referencing credible sources including the New York Times. The language is fluent – “What is this latest, ill-advised foray really supposed to achieve?” If it weren’t for Cantlie’s orange, Guantanamo-style shirt, this could almost be Newsnight.
The visual grammar of these films bears close examination. Cantlie first appears talking straight to the viewer, but the angle switches mid-speech, showing him in profile. It’s a technique common to modern documentary and TV interviews, requiring more than one camera or multiple takes. Cantlie’s broadcasts also end with a news-like sign-off: “Join me for the next programme”. In the beheading videos, “Jihadi John” and his masked kidnappers indicate their next victim at the end, as if enticing viewers to stay tuned, in the manner of a reality TV show. Why do this? Isis is trying to make its hostage videos look more professional, more entertaining, even.

The full extent of Isis’s media ambitions can be seen in the output of its “Al Hayat Media Center”. It makes programmes in several languages – primarily German, English and French – and multiple formats, from minute-long, Twitter-friendly “Mujatweets” to an hour-long “documentary” entitled The Flames Of War, which was heralded by its own Hollywood-style trailer.

Al Hayat Media’s programming is diverse. Eid Greetings from the Land of Khilafah, for example, filmed in occupied Raqqa, Syria, plays like a jihadi travel show. Isis fighters from Finland, Indonesia, Belgium, the UK and other countries speak of how happy they are to be there. “I don’t think there’s anything better than living in the land of khilafah,” says Abu Abdullah al-Habashi, from Britain. “We don’t need any democracy, we don’t need any communism or anything like that, all we need is sharia.” The interviews are intercut with colourful scenes of street life and children at a fairground. It even ends with the sign-off: “I wish you were here.” The “Mujatweets” also cynically display Isis’s gentle side: Isis handing out ice creams to children, a chef talking about his appetising shawarmas, a soldier comforting wounded comrades in hospital.

These films were put together with reasonable competence, despite being basic and inexpensively produced. They are most likely shot on standard equipment, according to professional film-makers. The shadow of a cameraman in one film suggests he is holding a small camcorder with a flip-out viewfinder. Other images betray the shallow depth of field of a DSLR camera, such as Canon’s 5D or 7D – easy to operate and to keep in focus. They use radio microphones for sound. Those effects and graphics and image-manipulation tools are standard on editing software like Adobe Premier; even phone apps can do a super slo-mo effect. The liberal use of effects heightens the sense of importance and filters the horror of the violence, but it also lends coherence to footage that must have come from disparate sources.

And this is propaganda, let’s not forget. There’s little evidence in these films of abduction, rape, persecution, destruction of mosques, crucifixions, severed heads mounted on railings, whippings of women found not wearing the hijab and other Isis-inflicted atrocities. Women are barely visible at all, in fact. And there’s no telling how much of it is actually staged. In The Flames Of War, for example, we see defeated soldiers from the Syrian Army’s 17th division apparently digging their own graves. One of them unconvincingly eulogises the bravery of Isis as he digs: “It’s as if Allah has blessed the Islamic State. They captured the 17th division base in a matter of seconds – even though there were 800 of us and they only numbered in the dozens.” In reality, Raqqa’s 17th division base had been under siege since long before Isis arrived and took weeks to capture.

The question for the world is: what can be done about it? The Frank Capra approach worked against a nation state like Nazi Germany (even if Why We Fight resorted to racial stereotyping and emotively manipulated history). It clearly isn’t going to work against an anonymous, amorphous, guerrilla media opponent. The US state department has already tried. Its Twitter site Think AgainTurn Away links to Isis-related news stories, and occasionally releases its own videos. Last month, it put out a parody of an Isis recruitment video, sarcastically listing jihadist activities: “Crucifying and executing muslims… suicide bombings inside mosques! … Travel is inexpensive … because you won’t need a return ticket!” Never mind the tastelessness, or the inferior production values, the activities listed barely differ from those in Isis’s own propaganda. Another Think Again … missive feebly parodies Isis’s Grand Theft Auto video:
“Grand Theft Innocence – don’t let Isis be your controller!” Predictably enough, Isis supporters have parodied Think AgainTurn Away’s parodies. It becomes a hall of mirrors.

Western film-makers face the same challenge. They only seem to be providing more raw material for Isis’s image library. Hollywood has even been accused of setting the tone, with its dark, doomsday scenarios, not to mention its own expensive recruitment films, from Top Gun to Transformers, made with the cooperation (and conditional approval) of the US military. As one critic recently observed: “Isis is moving in on their turf.”

Isis’s propaganda does cast some light on the US’s own output, suggests American documentary maker Eugene Jarecki. “Not only are we a pace-setter in production values, we are also a pace-setter in murderous, amoral, profoundly disturbing content the world over,” he says. “If we are watching [Isis] come up to speed, it’s to our own apparent obsession with gore and depravity.” Jarecki, a vocal critic of US policy, does not feel Isis deserves praise for its film-making. “It’s like saying ‘Hitler wasn’t such a bad painter’.” In his 2005 documentary, coincidentally also entitled Why We Fight, he detailed the increasing appetite for conflict on the part of the US military-industrial complex. “A threat like Isis plays directly into the hands of our military lobbyists who want such behaviour because it’s good for business.”

For Jarecki, the big question is who Isis truly is. “As the acronym shifts daily, we don’t know if these videos are actually being produced by a ragtag force seeking to provoke a superpower and her allies into war or if Isis is rather a front for more institutional actors, even states, pretending to be such a grassroots group. This is vital for knowing whether this development is one toward or away from the democratisation of the narrative.”

Joshua Oppenheimer, director of The Act Of Killing, also urges the west to reflect upon its own position. As a Londoner, Oppenheimer was chilled to hear the English accent of the executioner in the video of James Foley’s beheading. “He could have been my neighbour. This speaks volumes about who we have become, about our society, about alienation, about our relationship to the media, to fantasy, and via both to our fellow human beings. We must ask ourselves what moral vacuum have we created in the west, here at home. What alienation are we creating from each other, from community, from human life? How are we teaching our children to forget the preciousness of life? And how has our brutal, even barbaric, economic system brought us into these relationships to images, fantasies and media? I am challenging us to look at the masked executioner as though we are looking in the mirror.”

Isis could well be losing the propaganda war all by itself. The recent execution of Alan Henning, in particular, was condemned the world over. The video pleas to spare Henning’s life, from his wife and British Muslim leaders, stood in marked contrast to Isis’s own pumped-up rhetoric. They were calm, guileless, heartfelt, personal, entirely free of visual trickery. “Alan was volunteering with his Muslim friends to help the people of Syria,” said Barbara Henning in her video. “He was in the right place, doing the right thing.” The fact that Isis went ahead and killed him anyway, on the eve of the Islamic festival of Eid al-Adha, has exposed them as both inhumane and un-Islamic. In propaganda terms, it was a colossal own-goal. Now that Isis has hijacked the world’s attention, its philosophy surely cannot bear the scrutiny. In Capra’s terms, we need to examine both the enormity of Isis’s cause, and the justness of ours.

For more information, visit: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/07/isis-media-machine-propaganda-war
Workshop:
ISIS: Recruiting Foreign Fighters
Related PowerPoint: Islamic State of Iraq & Syria (ISIS)

✦ Objective(s):

- To demonstrate similarities and differences between the methods of recruitment utilized by organizations such as the United States Marines, ISIS, and the Red Cross
- To encourage students to be critical consumers of information

✦ Outline:

I. Review of ISIS [5 minutes]
II. Recruitment Pitches [10 minutes]
III. Recruitment Tactics Analysis [10 minutes]
IV. The Success of ISIS Recruitment and the Role of Media [20 minutes]

✦ Materials:

- Recruitment Tactics PowerPoint
- Article: “Hundreds of Westerners Have Joined ISIS”
- Article: “Go Ahead- Be Critical”
  http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0308-go-ahead-be-critical

✦ Key to Script:

- Italicized words indicate role/action.
- Bolded sentences are questions to be posed to class.
- Normal print indicates words to be spoken aloud.
Workshop Script:

Part I: Review of ISIS

Site Supervisor:
- In what ways does ISIS use technology to reach its audience?
- What method do you find most effective?
- Do you think it is important to distinguish false media advertising from “true” advertising? If so, how would you make that distinction?

Part II: Recruitment Pitches

Intern A:
- Today we are going to look at different values advertised by three organizations. Your job will be to try and pick which set of values you identify with most. After hearing each set of values, you will vote on which organization you would like to join.
  - Read the Organization X slide from the PowerPoint (slide 2).

Intern B:
- Read the Organization Y slide from the PowerPoint (slide 3).

Intern C:
  - Read the Organization Z slide from the PowerPoint (slide 4).
  - Now that you have heard each recruitment pitch, let’s vote on which organization you would like to join (slide 5).
  - After students have voted, reveal the actual names of each organization. Discuss results and reactions (slide 6).
  - Are you surprised by any of these organizations?

Part III: Recruitment Tactics Analysis

Intern A:
- Present “Aspects in Common” slides in the PowerPoint (slides 7-9).
  - What are some similarities you find in the logos, uniforms, and bonds between the members of each organization?

Intern B:
- Present the historical examples of propaganda schemes used by different organizations and governments (slides 10-12).
  - What similarities can you find between the historical examples of propaganda and the organizations we are discussing today? What are some differences?
Part IV: The Success of ISIS Recruitment and the Role of Media

Intern C:
- ISIS has undoubtedly been very successful in recruiting members from the Middle East, but they also have had success in recruiting members from Western nations. This is largely a result of how ISIS utilizes journalism and the media to appeal to potential members.
- Have the students read the article “Hundreds of Westerners Have Joined ISIS.”

Site Supervisor:
- ISIS is one of thousands of organizations that utilize the media and the Internet as a tool to advance its cause.
- Should the Internet be limited to keep terrorist organizations out? Is this possible?
- Have students read article: “Go Ahead: Be Critical.”
- It is important, especially in a world as interconnected as the one we live in, to be a critical consumer of information.
- What are some ways you can ensure that you get the best information possible?
- Remember to check multiple news sources, browse through governmental or non-governmental websites, and read accounts from members (or ex-members) of organizations in order to make an educated decision about the things you read online.
Recruitment Tactics

Organization X

There are numerous places to unwind and many opportunities to refresh, but when the work is done, most [members of Organization X] find themselves enjoying the company of fellow warriors. There is no tighter bond than that which exists between [members of Organization X]. For those who train, serve and fight alongside one another, the brotherhood continues outside of duty as well.

Organization Y

[Organization Y] has an extensive history of building relations within its borders in an effort to strengthen [their] ranks, unite them, and work together towards the establishment. Its practice of attending forums and addressing the concerns of the leaders is regularly met with success.

Organization Z

Every single day, the [Organization Z] helps people in emergencies. Whether it’s one displaced family, thousands of disaster victims, or providing care and comfort to an ill or injured service member or veteran or support to a military family member, our vital work is made possible by people like you. It is through the time and care of ordinary people that we can do extraordinary things.

Which organization would you join?

X: The Marines

Y: ISIS

Z: The Red Cross
Hundreds of Westerners Have Joined ISIS – Here’s Where They Came From

By Ben Winsor, Published: August 27, 2014

In the aftermath of the sadistic murder of American journalist James Foley by a suspected London-born ISIS recruit, increasing attention is being paid to the radicalization of Muslims from the West who are joining the conflict in Iraq and Syria. U.S. and European security services estimate that more than 1,000 of jihadist militants fighting in Iraq and Syria were drawn to the conflict from Western nations with some estimates putting the number as high as 3,000.

The [data] shows 700 recruits from France, 400 from the U.K., 320 from Germany, 250 from Belgium, 200 from Australia, 130 from the Netherlands, 100 from Canada, 100 from the U.S., and 51 from Spain.

The figures demonstrate alarming numbers from the U.K. and France in particular. In both countries, the integration of immigrant communities — and Islamic communities in particular— remains a hot-button political issue. Per capita, Belgium is the biggest source of western ISIS recruits.

Joining ISIS

Given the chaotic nature of the fighting, people who have left their home countries to join the conflict are hard to track. Further, there are multiple militant groups on the ground in Iraq and Syria that could attract Western fighters.

But from the studies Business Insider analyzed, it appears the majority of those who join the conflict end up fighting for ISIS. Some experts, such as Professor Peter Neumann of King's College London, estimate the number could be as high as 80%.

ISIS has been targeting Western recruits with social-media campaigns, slickly produced videos, and English-language publications.

The phenomena poses a special challenge to security services because the Western passports used by the fighters are not subject to the restrictions and visa requirements placed on many non-Western citizens.

Countries such as the U.K. and Australia are dealing with the growing threat posed by their citizens leaving to join ISIS by seeking to integrate divided communities and empower mainstream Muslims.

They're also beefing up surveillance and canceling passports of suspected militants. The Westerners joining the conflict are predominantly young men, though there are increasing reports of women and even children traveling to the region.

Innes Bowen, author of "Inside British Islam," told Business Insider there was no single type of person who becomes a radical in the U.K., and no single pathway to their ideology.

"There must be a range of motivations — a sense of adventure, a misplaced sense of duty or idealism — some of those recruited are well versed in ideology and the politics of their radical cause others are surprisingly ignorant," Bowen said.

For more information, visit:
"Don't be so critical."

Maybe you've heard that from time to time. But when it comes to things you read and see, it pays to think critically. Everything that's written is written by someone for a reason. Every media message you see — whether it's a news story or an ad on television — was created by someone for a purpose.

Do you believe everything you see? Probably not. But how do you decide what's true and whether to believe it? Try this: You see a picture of an athlete in an ad. This quote is beside the picture: "This shoe lets me run faster and jump higher. Come with me."

Do you believe him and buy the shoe? Why or why not? Would it matter if the athlete was paid to say this?

You care about the environment, and see yourself as "green." You see an ad that suggests that buying bamboo clothes makes you eco-friendly. But you know that most "bamboo" clothes are really rayon.

Do you believe this ad?

When you see a message in any medium — a news article, a commercial, a story online, even your textbooks — ask yourself these three questions:

1. Who's responsible for the message?
2. What is the message actually saying?
3. What does it want me to do?

Ad it Up

What is advertising? You see it every day — you might even be wearing an ad now. If you look for it, you can probably spot ads nearly anywhere you go.

Advertising is a tool to get your attention and make you interested in something — maybe a product, an idea, or an issue. Ads try to get you to do, buy, or think something — whether it's a product, idea, issue, or service. All of them are created by someone, and all of them have a purpose: to get you to do, buy, or think something.

Do you take all ads at face value? Will you automatically believe that this cereal tastes the best, or that face wash can't be beat? Probably not. Maybe your experience tells you that the cereal really does taste the best. But you'll want to think critically about the information you get in ads. You can start with three key questions. If you spot an ad, ask yourself:

1. Who's responsible for the ad?
2. What is the ad actually saying?
3. What does the ad want me to do?

Once you know who's behind the ad, you've deciphered what the ad is saying in words and images, and thought about what the ad wants you to do, then you can better decide for yourself what you think.

For more information, visit:
http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0308-go-ahead-be-critical
We hope you enjoyed this preview of

**HOT TOPICS & HOT SPOTS:**
**EXPLORING GLOBAL CHALLENGES**

For a complete edition, please contact:

Jessica Chan  
Director, Global Connect @ UCI  
Phone: (949) 824-9407  
Email: jjchan@uci.edu