Scholars interested in communication technologies and security issues, including terrorism and the mass media, may have never heard of the term “terroredia”—that is, until they read Mahmoud Eid’s *Exchanging Terrorism Oxygen for Media Airwaves: The Age of Terroredia*. In this edited volume, Eid navigates a complex and contentious area of scholarship to offer a cogent analysis of the relationship between media and terrorism. The renewed salience of terrorism in the public imagination, world public opinion, and international policy agendas is occurring not only in the wake of Al-Qaeda’s September 11 attacks on the U.S., but also in the context of increasing global attention directed at the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) after it beheaded Western hostages and broadcast the killings online. How “old” and “new” media outlets and terrorist organizations co-depend on one another is the main thrust of the book. Specifically, this book aims to provide a comprehensive account of “the phenomenal relationship between terrorists and media personnel for achieving goals of both parties” (p. xvi).

But what is “terroredia”? Eid argues that the traditional assumption of the “symbiotic” relationship between the media and terrorists needs to be reconsidered to transcend the traditional “culpable media” and “vulnerable media” (p. 3) models, in which the media are either accused of inciting terrorism or absolving them of such transgression. Instead of “symbiosis,” the book proposes an inquiry into the interactive relationship between the media and terrorism—one that underscores both the symmetrical and asymmetrical dimensions of that “codependency.” This is the essence of “terroredia,” which is

The interactive, codependent, and inseparable relationship between terrorism and the media, in which acts of terrorism and their media coverage are essentially exchanged to achieve the ultimate aims of both parties—exchanging terrorism’s wide-ranging publicity and public attention (i.e. oxygen) for media’s wide-ranging reach and influence (e.g. airwaves). (p. 4)

“Terroredia” emphasizes the ultimate mediatization of terrorism and the mutually beneficial relationship that binds terrorists and media personnel. While terrorists indeed court media exposure to influence the public and policymakers through intimidating acts of violence, terrorism offers media outlets an emotionally gripping story that attracts massive audiences. Moreover, “a vicious cycle of violence, media attention, and public fear” (p. 5) fuels the phenomenon of “terroredia.”

The book’s diverse contributions illustrate both the complicated and interdisciplinary enterprise of studying terrorism, including definitional and methodological questions. Eid’s second chapter of the volume begins the task of untangling the complexity of this project in a comprehensive review of previous terrorism research, revis-
iting the dizzying number of existing definitions that seek to pin down what terrorism is and is not. Similarly, in Chapter 3 Robert Hacket raises the interesting questions of whether violence and terrorism constitute a form of communication and how mediated communications may be considered a form of violence. According to Hacket, both insurgent terrorism and state terrorism use the media to dramatize the consequences of ignoring their demands, as well as to intimidate dissidents and those who defy the will of world powers. Hacket suggests three means of addressing the vexatious nature of “media terror” (p. 34) promoting peace journalism, alternative media, and media reform can stave off the overt propagation of insurgent terrorism and state terrorism on the airwaves.

The organization of the book offers a clear road map for the reader to assess the multifaceted relationship between media and terrorism. The editor has logically ordered the contributions into eight sections that broadly investigate 1) terrorism manifestations, tactics, and types; 2) media representations, stereotypes, and strategies; and 3) new media, new terrorism, and issues of rationality and responsibility. The book is structured so that each section provides a “terrorism focused” chapter followed by a “media focused” chapter covering the same theme and uncovering the terrorism-media relationship and convergence.

For instance, “Section 2: Terrorism Manifestations & Media Representations” presents the continuum in terrorism tactics and the prevalence of fear, and also critiques mainstream media’s construction of terrorism in different national contexts. According to Jonathan R. White in Chapter 4, terrorism is a “method of fighting” (p. 45) in which the strategies and tactics have been constantly changing from simple operations to increasingly sophisticated, blockbuster attacks that involve complex networks. The chapter underscores the fact that while terrorism tactics, such as bombing, may be characterized as simple, it is the organizational infrastructure required to facilitate such an attack that has become complex. White amply discusses the importance of the underlying “force multipliers” sustaining terrorism’s “aura of fear”: media coverage, technology, and transnational support (p. 49). In Chapter 5, John H. Downing’s comparative analysis of the French, British, and American media’s representations of terrorism reveals a largely untold context of terrorism: the confluence of state policies and the mass media in justifying state violence, terror, and torture against both civilians and “non-state agents” (p. 66). With the exception of alternative and radical media outlets, most mainstream media appear to rationalize and justify state violence, whether it is France’s clamping of Algerian revolutionaries, the British media’s treatment of Northern Ireland, or the U.S.’s global “war on terror” and its involvement in the Middle East.

In the same comparative vein, sections 3, 4, and 5 of the book comprise several chapters that contrast terrorism typologies and tactics to media strategies and stereotypes to understand terrorism environments. For example, in Chapter 6 Gus Martin lays out eight detailed, descriptive typologies of terrorism that include New Terrorism, State Terrorism, Dissident Terrorism, Religious Terrorism, Ideological Terrorism, International Terrorism, Criminal Dissident Terrorism, and Gender-Selective Terrorism. In Chapter 7, Georgios Terzis explains how the professional culture of journalism, including organizational, technical, and political constraints, largely influences the rhetor-
ical strategies embedded in the media’s stereotypical coverage of terrorism. Moreover, these stereotypes are tightly linked to both tactics of terrorism and media strategies, such as ideological motivation and the “dumbing down” of the news, as Brigitte L. Nacos and Randal Marlin argue in Chapters 8 and 9 respectively.

But how do terrorists and the media function in the changing terrorism environment as well as in the ascendance of new media? The rest of the contributions offer several insights and cogent explanations that address this question. According to Dana Janbek in Chapter 10, terrorist organizations have adapted their recruitment strategies, relying on both face-to-face and new communication technologies, recruiting more women, looking for diverse funding sources, and moving into decentralized operational structures. The same observation about adaptability and flexibility applies to the media, as Muhammad Ayish’s review of how media organizations function reveals in Chapter 11. These shifts are more clearly pronounced in what can be termed as the complex blending of “new terrorism” and “new media,” which Mahmoud Eid and Pauline Hope discuss separately in Chapters 12 and 13 respectively. New communication technologies have facilitated new forms of terrorist attacks, described as “cyber-terrorism,” and the radicalization of more recruits online, as Maura Conway argues in Chapter 14. Yet, as Samuel P. Winch argues in Chapter 15, a visual analysis of Western news media, new media’s role in the “Arab Spring” has helped shift the stereotypical treatment of the Middle East from bloodthirsty, “angry Arab terrorists” to modern, Internet-savvy youths demanding democratic freedoms and toppling the region’s autocrats. The volume concludes with two chapters that interrogate both terrorism strategies and policies and media discourses about terrorism.

*Exchanging Terrorism Oxygen for Media Airwaves: The Age of Terroredia* is useful and indispensable reading for scholars and students on multiple levels. Individually, these contributions offer well-informed and thought-provoking insights into the nature of the relationship between media and terrorism. While underscoring their codependence, each chapter maps out one facet of the complex relationship between terrorism and the media, offering alternative and multidisciplinary approaches. Collectively, these contributions provide a new synthesis of the literature on media and terrorism. The collective intellectual effort of the contributors and the editor will certainly enrich the debate surrounding the contentious relationship between the media and terrorism. It would have been ideal to specifically discuss, or reiterate, the book’s major concept of “terroredia” in the rest of the contributions, although such a task may be more appropriate for a single-authored volume rather than an edited collection.

Overall, Eid’s book should be counted as a serious attempt to grapple with the blurred lines of responsibility and mutual interest between terrorism and the media. This volume offers convincing evidence of how the mediatization of terrorism fuels persistent cycles of indiscriminate violence, mass panic, and retaliation targeting civilians. The ensuing media spectacles following terrorist attacks have become mass rituals of “terroredia.”

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