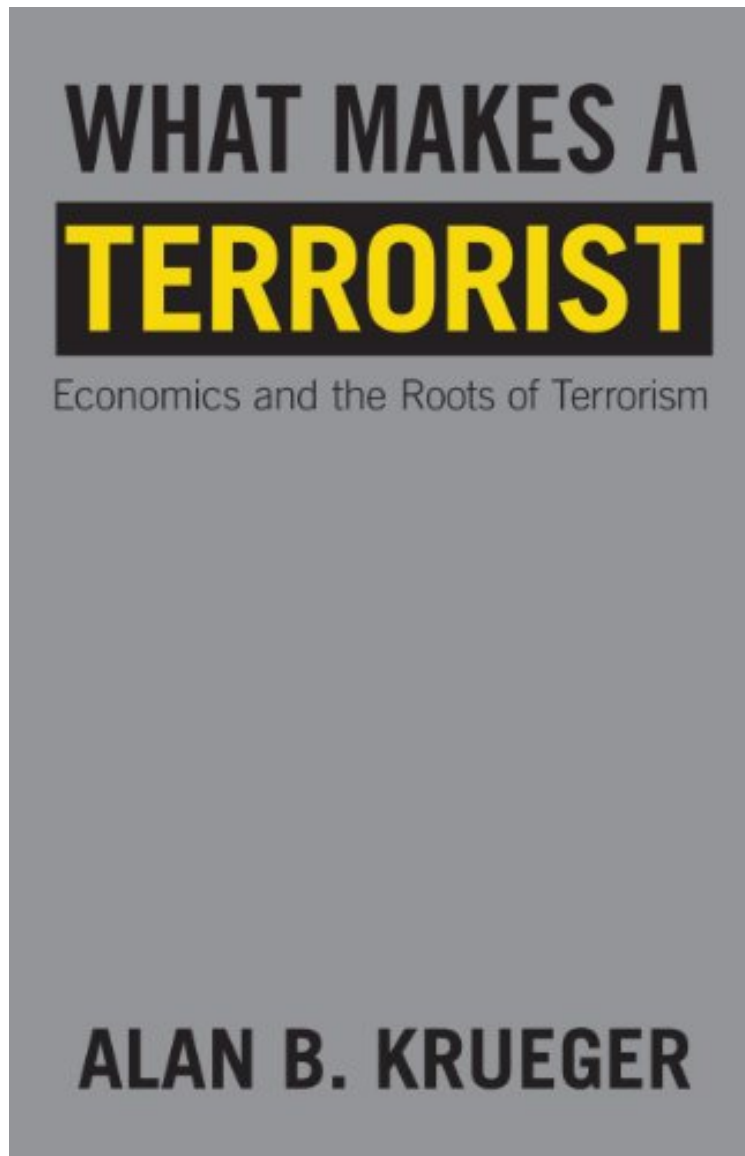


(Free read ebook) What Makes a Terrorist: Economics and the Roots of Terrorism

What Makes a Terrorist: Economics and the Roots of Terrorism

Alan B. Krueger

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Alan B. Krueger : What Makes a Terrorist: Economics and the Roots of Terrorism before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What Makes a Terrorist: Economics and the Roots of Terrorism:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Money worth spendBy ArringtonOur globally-besieged world we know and live in today has become more than a troubled-prone environment. The act of terrorism to some extent had rendered us mentally paralyzed -in this vein we have become creatures of fears. As a result, allowing hatred to overshadow the beauty and uniqueness of love. Thus, if we want to free ourselves from such intrabondage, it is only

prudent enough that we understand the rudiments of terrorism that appears to rub us of our predilections to travel and enjoy our inalienable rights given to us by the omnipotent father. And there's no better place to start than reading Krueger's book that is succinct and easy to read and understand. 16 of 19 people found the following review helpful.

Dismal Science: The Economics of Terrorism By Omer Belsky

In a series of three lectures, economist Alan Krueger offers 2 major insights on terrorism, one of them well known but oft forgotten, and the other somewhat more surprising. He then goes on to investigate various consequences of terrorism. Ultimately, his study leaves most of the truly difficult questions of terrorism unanswered - but given the enormity of the challenge, that is not really surprising. Krueger opens by demolishing a myth that should have died a long time ago - that terrorism is caused by economic depravity. It turns out that there is no statistical correlation between either poverty or lack of education and terrorism. Krueger points out that we tend to analogize terrorism to property crime, of which the poor are guiltier than the rich. But that is the wrong view - terrorism should be seen as the equivalent of voting - an activity carried out by the educated and well informed, not by the hungry and rather apolitical masses. In the second chapter, Krueger explores other issues relating to terrorism. His main conclusion is that terrorism is mostly a local issue: long range attacks such as 9/11 and 7/7 are the exception rather than the rule. Terrorism often works across religious lines: the targets of terrorist attacks are overwhelmingly members of another religion. But the particular religion doesn't matter: Islamic terrorists are no more widespread than other terrorists. Perhaps most significantly, Krueger finds that terrorists usually come from countries with poor civil and political liberties. The final lecture deals with the consequences of terrorism. Krueger presents two views of terror's economic effects: That it has a big, lasting effect, or that it is only a temporary thing. Overall, Krueger comes out in favor of the latter, although he concedes that there are good counter arguments. I think there are a lot of questions that are left unanswered in Krueger's study. First, Krueger does not differentiate his various terrorists. As I pointed out earlier, the ones involved in long range attacks like 9/11 are the exception, rather than the rule. Is the analysis Krueger offers for terrorists in general also relevant for al-Qaeda type terrorists? If terrorism is a world wide phenomenon, why are the majority of the terrorist attacks against US and Western targets Muslim or Arab in origin? More generally, what determines what target will a terrorist choose? Conceivably, North Koreans living under a dictatorship have legitimate grievances against the US for occupying their country - and yet North Korean terrorists are not attacking the US. The same could be said for Latin American and other East Asian countries. As Krueger points out, Terrorism is a tactic, not an enemy. The challenge of extreme Islam may be a unique danger even if it has no monopoly on the use of terrorism. And the alleged solution - promoting civil liberties and political rights in states that hate the West - may be worse than the disease, as we are learning, to our sorrow, from the Iraq fiasco.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Pwas great

Many popular ideas about terrorists and why they seek to harm us are fueled by falsehoods and misinformation. Leading politicians and scholars have argued that poverty and lack of education breed terrorism, despite the wealth of evidence showing that most terrorists come from middle-class, and often college-educated, backgrounds. In *What Makes a Terrorist*, Alan Krueger argues that if we are to correctly assess the root causes of terrorism and successfully address the threat, we must think more like economists do. Krueger is an influential economist who has applied rigorous statistical analysis to a range of tough issues, from the minimum wage and education to the occurrence of hate crimes. In this book, he explains why our tactics in the fight against terrorism must be based on more than anecdote and speculation. Krueger closely examines the factors that motivate individuals to participate in terrorism, drawing inferences from terrorists' own backgrounds and the economic, social, and political conditions in the societies from which they come. He describes which countries are the most likely breeding grounds for terrorists, and which ones are most likely to be their targets. Krueger addresses the economic and psychological consequences of terrorism. He puts the terrorist threat squarely into perspective, revealing how our nation's sizeable economy is diverse and resilient enough to withstand the comparatively limited effects of most terrorist strikes. And he calls on the media to be more responsible in reporting on terrorism. *What Makes a Terrorist* brings needed clarity to one of the greatest challenges of our time.

"What are the individual and societal causes of terrorism? The book's great strength is its focus on new sources of data examined in new ways. The most compelling analysis in the book is of biographical information on operatives from Hezbollah and Hamas. This is a substantial contribution, offering insight into who becomes a terrorist and, as important, pushing terrorism studies in a productive new direction, toward microlevel data. The book provides a valuable service in dispelling the stereotype of the poor, ignorant terrorist."--Ethan Bueno de Mesquita, *Science* "It seems universally obvious that poverty and poor education breed terrorism. But it's wrong. . . . [Alan Krueger] went in search of evidence for the terrorism part of the proposition and found next to none. He has set out his findings in *What Makes A Terrorist*."--Peter Martin, *Canberra Times* "This new book by Alan Krueger, full of first-rate empirical work, punctures many myths about terrorism."--Tyler Cowen, *Marginal Revolution* "[Krueger] seeks to put the risks Americans face from terrorism into 'proper perspective' with his unique book."--John McCaslin, *Washington Times* "What Makes a Terrorist brings together disparate data, such as academic studies and government reports,

arraying them into a concise, accessible argument against the notion that we can defeat terrorism through aid and education. While Krueger is careful to affirm that these are useful in combating many social ills, he is adamant that terrorism is not one of them. He offers skilled analysis to show that an aggressive foreign policy based on this fallacious assumption has cost several nations dearly and also warns that continuing along this course may provoke further terrorist acts."--Tony Azios, *Christian Science Monitor*"Using raw data from government, academic, and think-tank sources and citing the work of other economists on poverty, race, terrorism, and hate crimes, Krueger explains in clear and accessible prose that the average terrorist suspect is highly educated, professionally employed, from a middle- or higher-class background, and, most important, from a country that suppresses civil liberties. . . . Avoiding jargon whenever possible and defining it when unavoidable, Krueger excels in making his difficult subject easy to grasp without reducing its inherent complexity. The occasional pop culture reference (e.g., to the *Daily Show*) adds to the appeal. Highly recommended for both academic and public collections."--April Younglove, *Library Journal* (starred review)"What makes a terrorist? Are the drivers primarily political or economic? Princeton economist Alan Krueger has made a great study of this question...What Makes a Terrorist lacks a question mark. That's because Krueger, marshaling persuasive statistics and analysis, comes down firmly on the side of politics, noting most terrorists are middle-class and well-educated."--Thomas P.M. Barnett, *Knoxville News Sentinel*"[Krueger] analyzed data from NCTC and elsewhere, and came up with often counter-intuitive findings. . . . Krueger's book collects comprehensive evidence."--Zack Phillips, *Government Executive*"An invaluable little book. . . . What Makes a Terrorist uses standard tools of economics and statistical analysis to get at the truth about terrorism. . . . Krueger finds one familiar fact in all his numbers. Countries with fewer civil liberties tend to produce more terrorists."--Daniel Finkelstein, *Times (London)*"Krueger's book is a necessary read for anyone who wishes to understand terrorism, especially because many of the popular notions of what causes it are not rooted in reality. One wishes that politicians, especially, would pay attention."--Amit Varma, *Live Mint*"[Krueger] in his groundbreaking new book, *What Makes a Terrorist*, enlists the 'dismal science' to tackle the despicable one. Provocative, dispassionate and accessible, Krueger's book is a breath of fresh air in the stifling climate of empty speculation that dominates the terror dialogue in post-9/11 America."--Ryan Hagen, *Brooklyn Rail*"To challenge the widespread view that terrorism is caused by economic deprivation and lack of education, Krueger redirects thinking about terrorism by raising three provocative questions that can be answered by scrutiny of evidence from an economic perspective. . . . Krueger shows how complex the data and issues are, the dangers of moving from correlation to cause--and how to think clearly and courageously about politically motivated violence."--L.J. Alderink, *Choice*"I am quite sure that this book will be very widely read; it builds on recent literature by both Krueger and a young breed of scholars who have used technical sophistication to disprove the expected positive effect of poverty and ignorance on terrorism."--Siddhartha Mitra, *Eastern Economic Journal*"[E]minently readable and informative."--Ira Smolensky, *Magill Book s*Praise for *What Makes a Terrorist*: "In this beautifully written book, one of the world's most respected economists tackles the question of terrorism. Krueger's work represents the most careful data-driven research ever done in this area. This is a book that a lay audience will read and enjoy, but with a rigor and depth that will inform the experts in the field. This is timely and important work which should play a critical role in shaping our public policies on terrorism."--Steven D. Levitt, coauthor of *Freakonomics*Praise for *What Makes a Terrorist*: "Alan Krueger . . . has done pathbreaking research on why so many terrorists come from middle-class backgrounds."--David Leonhardt, *New York Times*Praise for *What Makes a Terrorist*: "Full of first-rate empirical work."--Tyler Cowen, *Marginal Revolution*Praise for *What Makes a Terrorist*: "Economist Alan Krueger . . . explores this phenomenon with a systematic study of the evidence. . . . All in all, the research that Krueger gathers together suggests that if there is a link between poverty, education and terrorism, it is the opposite of the one popularly assumed."--Tim Harford, *Financial Times*Praise for *What Makes a Terrorist*: "An invaluable little book. . . . [U]ses standard tools of economics and statistical analysis to get at the truth about terrorism."--Daniel Finkelstein, *Times (London)*Praise for *What Makes a Terrorist*: "This book is a model of how academics can contribute to major public policy debates."--Lawrence D. Freedman, *Foreign Affairs*From the Back Cover"This is a very important book. Krueger proves--with facts, figures, and interviews--that terrorists are not desperately poor killers but well-educated politicians using violence to draw attention to their 'market'--violent change. The way you beat them--as we did in Peru--is not with bigger guns but with better ideas and legal reforms that win over their largest constituency, the poor."--Hernando de Soto, author of *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*"Professor Krueger's well-researched analysis is exactly the kind of resource the country needs in order to make wise decisions in the war on terror. His extensive data and insightful commentary go to the heart of the causes and consequences of terrorism, with often startling conclusions. A fascinating tour de force, this book will assist scholars and policymakers alike."--Raphael Perl, senior terrorism policy analyst, Congressional Research Service"This is a book that even George Bush could understand. The United States would be more effective in combating terrorism if the president and his advisors embraced Alan Krueger's fine work. When the history of the 'war on terror' is written, Krueger will be one of the few cited for having taken the time to wrestle with facts and data rather than pander to racist prejudice and fear mongering."--Larry Johnson, CEO of BERG Associates and former CIA counterterrorism official"These three lectures on terrorism are, despite the gruesomeness

of the topic, a delight to read. Who else but Krueger could juxtapose negative binomial regressions and cuts from Comedy Central in a natural way? This book provides clear state-of-the-art answers to fundamental questions about terrorism in a manner that is broadly accessible."--David Laitin, Stanford University

About the Author Alan B. Krueger is the Bendheim Professor of Economics and Public Policy at Princeton University, former chairman of President Barack Obama's Council of Economic Advisers, and an adviser to the National Counterterrorism Center. He is the coauthor of *Myth and Measurement: The New Economics of the Minimum Wage* (Princeton) and *Inequality in America*. He lives in Princeton, New Jersey.