



ANWAR AL-AWLAKI

PART I: PROSECUTED HOMEGROWN RADICALS WITH TIES TO ANWAR AL-AWLAKI

PART II: ANWAR AL-AWLAKI: VIOLENT PREACHER UBIQUITOUS ON YOUTUBE

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PART I: PROSECUTED HOMEGROWN RADICALS WITH TIES TO ANWAR AL-AWLAKI

[Anwar al-Awlaki](#) served as director of external operations for [al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula](#) (AQAP). He was the first U.S. citizen targeted in a U.S. drone strike (September 30, 2011) due to his role in taking the “lead in planning and directing efforts to murder innocent Americans,” according to President Barack Obama.

Al-Awlaki has inspired numerous homegrown extremists to commit acts of terror. Enrique Marquez Jr. and Syed Rizwan Farook, one of the shooters in the December 2 San Bernardino massacre that killed 14, spent hours listening to al-Awlaki’s lectures and poring over directions on making explosives in the AQAP magazine al-Awlaki helped create, *Inspire*, according to the criminal complaint against Marquez. Al-Awlaki was directly in contact with Fort Hood shooter Nidal Hasan (2009) and underwear bomber Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab (2009). Al-Awlaki inspired Times Square bomber Faisal Shahzad (2010) and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev of the Boston Marathon bombings (2013).

Among its [profiles](#) of Americans arrested for attempting to join jihadist groups, the Counter Extremism Project (CEP) has documented at least 20 cases in which al-Awlaki’s radicalizing influence was a key factor.¹ He has also inspired countless others around the world via his online materials to join [al-Qaeda](#), [al-Shabab](#), and [ISIS](#). **Even after his death, al-Awlaki’s ideology and lectures continue to influence, propagandize, and incite to violence.**

1. Zachary Chesser ([U.S. Senate](#), 2012, [Washington Post](#))
 - a. Allegedly emailed with al-Awlaki (p. 9)

¹ [Zachary Chesser](#), [Shannon Maureen Conley](#), [Christopher Lee Cornell](#), Adel Daoud, [Adnan Farah](#), Nidal Hasan, [Asher Abid Khan](#), Enrique Marquez Jr., [Terrence J. McNeil](#), [Yahya Farooq Mohammed](#), [Ibrahim Zubair Mohammed](#), Jesse Curtis Morton, [Tairod Nathan Webster Pugh](#), [Alaa Saadeh](#), [Nader Saadeh](#), [Munther Omar Saleh](#), [Asif Ahmed Salim](#), [Sultane Room Salim](#), [Asia Siddiqui](#), [Nicholas Teausant](#), [Abdella Ahmad Tounisi](#), Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, [Joshua Ray Van Haften](#)

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- b. Regularly reposted al-Awlaki's videos on his YouTube channel (p. 17)
- c. From Senate report: "Chesser's YouTube postings received national media attention on April 15, 2010, when he posted a video with an al-Aulaqi [al-Awlaki] lecture which called for the assassination of anyone who has 'defamed Mohammad.' At the end of the video, Chesser included the addresses of the Comedy Central office and the creators of the adult cartoon, South Park. Referencing the 2004 murder of director Theo Van Gogh by an Islamist extremist he noted, "We have to warn Matt Stone and Trey Parker [South Park creators] that what they are doing is stupid and will probably wind up like Theo Van Gogh for airing this show." (p. 17)
2. Shannon Maureen Conley ([U.S. Justice Department, 2014](#), [Denver Channel](#))
 - a. Owned DVDs of al-Awlaki's lectures (p. 9)
3. Christopher Lee Cornell ([U.S. Justice Department, 2015](#))
 - a. Told FBI informant he got a "thumbs up" from al-Awlaki before al-Awlaki's "martyrdom" (p. 3)
4. Adel Daoud ([U.S. Justice Department, 2013](#))
 - a. Sent himself emails with "al-Awlaki articles" (p. 6)
 - b. Viewed al-Awlaki propaganda on YouTube (p. 7)
 - c. Sent an email to an acquaintance that read:
 - i. "Those people insulting awlaki can go kill themselves mashaAllah he is very knowledgable w. a decent character. inshaAllah [God willing] hes accepted as a Shaheed [martyr]." (p. 7-8)
 - d. Sent an acquaintance a video of al-Awlaki's "Hereafter series" (p. 9)
 - e. Sent an acquaintance an article written by al-Awlaki titled "44 ways to support jihad" (p. 10)
 - f. Watched a video titled "Martyrdom Operations or Suicide Bombings! By Shk Anwar ALAwlaki" (p. 13-14)
5. Adnan Farah ([U.S. Justice Department, 2015](#), [MPR](#))
 - a. Posted photos of al-Awlaki on social media (banner on Facebook) (p. 11 and Exhibit 1)
6. Nidal Hasan ([FBI, 2009](#))
 - a. Hasan visited al-Awlaki's personal website (p. 1)
 - b. Emailed with al-Awlaki before carrying out the November 2009 Fort Hood, Texas, shootings. In a specific email, Hasan asked al-Awlaki to make "general comments" about Muslims in the U.S. military. He sent numerous subsequent emails to al-Awlaki, inquiring about a range of Islamic-related topics. In total, Hasan had "eighteen communications" with al-Awlaki (pp. 6, 46-52)
7. Asher Abid Khan ([U.S. Justice Department, 2015](#))
 - a. Watched al-Awlaki videos on YouTube and sent to friends over messages on social media (p. 16)
 - b. The criminal complaint reports:
 - i. "On or about February 14, 2014, Khan and Individual 1 had the following conversation about a Youtube video."

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- ii. (Footnote: “The Youtube video is currently still available and entitled ‘Tribute to Sheikh Anwar Al -Awlaki.’ The video depicts Al-Awlaki’s speeches and commentary. It further shows a U.S. government statement announcing that Awlaki, a leader of Al ‘Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, was killed in Yemen.”) (p. 16)
8. Enrique Marquez Jr. ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2015, [New York Times](#))
 - a. Listened to al-Awlaki’s lectures in 2010-2011 and discussed al-Awlaki’s ideology with his co-conspirator, San Bernardino shooter Syed Farook (p. 3)
9. Terrence McNeil ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2015, [Guardian](#))
 - a. According to the criminal complaint filed against him, McNeil operated a Tumblr blog at <https://abu-fil.tumblr.com> (now suspended) (p. 9)
 - b. According to the *Guardian*, the account user of a Tumblr blog believed to be McNeil’s often posted al-Awlaki’s sermons.
10. Farooq Mohammed ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2015)
 - a. Attempted to provide material support and resources to al-Awlaki (p. 13)
11. Ibrahim Mohammed ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2015)
 - a. Attempted to provide material support and resources to al-Awlaki (p. 13)
12. Jesse Curtis Morton a.k.a. Younus Abdullah Mohammad ([U.S. Department of Justice](#), 2015)
 - a. Founded the website “Revolution Muslim” on which he espoused al-Awlaki’s ideology (p. 4)
 - b. Posted a message from al-Awlaki calling for the assassination of an unnamed artist who had drawn the Islamic prophet Mohammad (p. 6)
 - c. On “multiple occasions” posted speeches by al-Awlaki that justified the killing of those who insult the prophet Mohammad. (p. 6)
13. Tairod Nathan Webster Pugh ([ADL](#), [Buzzfeed](#))
 - a. Posted al-Awlaki’s quotes on social media

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Tairod Pugh shared Muslim Ummah's photo.
August 3, 2014 · 🌐



Muslim Ummah

There has been a plethora of reports from governmental and non-governmental sources on how to defeat what they perceive as the Islamic danger. For example RAND Corporation, which is a think tank affiliated to the Pentagon, has issued a couple of reports on this. They have openly stated that they are unhappy with the way Islam is and want to change it. They then proceed to delineate the characteristics of their version of Islam and how to promote it. They also describe the type of Muslims that they think might be willing to prescribe to this "Rand Islam." Because they understand that the masses in the Muslim world have lost trust in the US, they state that the US hand in this effort should be hidden and that their Muslim stooges should be in the forefront. Muslims need to be able to tell the difference between the real Islam and the RAND Islam and they need to know who their enemy is. Living in the West, they also have a responsibility of refuting such attempts of changing the religion of Allah.

We need to take our religion more seriously. Islam is not something that we use to fill in the spiritual compartment of our life while we leave everything else to our whims and desires. Islam should rule over every aspect of our life.

~ Imam Anwar al awlaki.

14. Alaa Saadeh ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2015)
 - a. Refers to an unspecified "web page" where he viewed al-Awlaki's lectures (p. 39)
15. Nader Saadeh ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2015)
 - b. Said that America should "burn" for killing al-Awlaki (p. 7)
 - c. Watched al-Awlaki videos on a "web page" (p. 8)
16. Munther Omar Saleh ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2015)
 - d. Saleh reportedly translated ISIS videos from Arabic to English. In May 2015, Saleh visited a message board and "viewed...a post seeking translation of Arabic material referenced in a lecture by Anwar al-Awlaki." (p. 6)
17. Asif Ahmed Salim ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2015)
 - e. Attempted to provide material support and resources to al-Awlaki (p. 13)
18. Sultan Roome Salim ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2015)
 - f. Attempted to provide material support and resources to al-Awlaki (p. 13)
19. Asia Siddiqui ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2015)
 - g. Published a poem in AQAP's magazine, *Inspire*, which al-Awlaki co-founded and in which he was regularly featured (p. 5)
20. Nicholas Teausant ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2014)
 - h. Reportedly read AQAP's English-language magazine, *Inspire*, which he downloaded to his laptop computer (p. 8, 20)
 - i. Watched al-Awkaki's videos: Purported [YouTube channel](#)

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The screenshot shows the YouTube channel page for Nicholas Teasant. At the top, the channel name "Nicholas Teasant" is displayed with navigation links for Videos, Playlists, Channels, Discussion, and About. Below the channel name, three activity items are listed:

- Nicholas Teasant liked a video 1 year ago**: A video titled "Faces of Death IV" by wojoo5, 3 years ago, with 1,568,649 views. The description reads: "Your senses will be numbed when you witness actual footage of a human barbeque, the electrocution of a woman on death row, news footage of a terrorist blown to bits when his..."
- Nicholas Teasant liked a video 2 years ago**: A video titled "Secret Dawah and Significance of Youth - Anwar Al Awlaki" by Umair Raza, 3 years ago, with 2,516 views. The description includes a Facebook link: "Join us on facebook: http://www.facebook.com/GardenOfTheRighteous".
- Nicholas Teasant subscribed to a channel 2 years ago**: A channel for Umair Raza, who has 115 videos. A "Subscribe" button is visible with 1,404 subscribers.

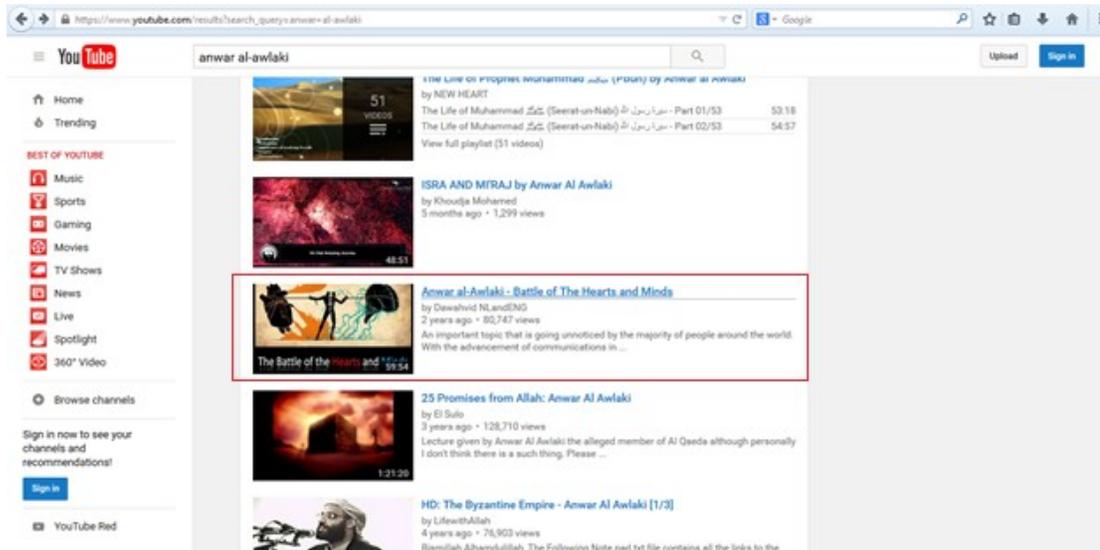
21. Abdella Ahmad Tounisi ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2013)
 - a. Viewed al-Awlaki propaganda on YouTube (p. 7)
22. Dzhokhar Tsarnaev ([U.S. Justice Department, 2013](#), [New York Times](#), [CNN](#))
 - b. Dzhokhar downloaded an electronic copy of a book entitled “The Slicing Sword Against The One Who Forms Allegiances With The Disbelievers And Takes Them As Supporters Instead Of Allah, His Messenger And The Believers” with a forward by Anwar al-Awlaki (p. 6)
 - c. Downloaded Volume One of al-Awlaki’s *Inspire*, which includes bomb-building instructions (p. 7-8)
 - d. Approximately three weeks before the Boston bombings, Tsarnaev tweeted: “Listen to Anwar al-Awlaki’s ... here after series... you will gain an unbelievable amount of knowledge.”
 - e. Al-Awlaki’s YouTube videos were found on Dzhokhar’s—and his brother Tamerlan’s—electronic devices.
23. Joshua Ray Van Haften ([U.S. Justice Department](#), 2014)
 - a. Posted al-Awlaki videos on Facebook (p. 6-7)

PART II: ANWAR AL-AWLAKI: VIOLENT PREACHER

UBIQUITOUS ON YOUTUBE

Fast Facts: Anwar al-Awlaki on YouTube

- “Anwar al-Awlaki jihad” yielded 7,780 search results as of January 8, 2015.
- “Anwar al-Awlaki” yielded [61,900](#) search results as of December 18, 2015, and then yielded 60,800 results as of January 8, 2015.
- On the first page of hits based on a simple search for “Anwar al-Awlaki” reveals “Anwar al-Awlaki - Battle of The Hearts and Minds” ([video](#)), an hour-long polemic demonizing the United States.

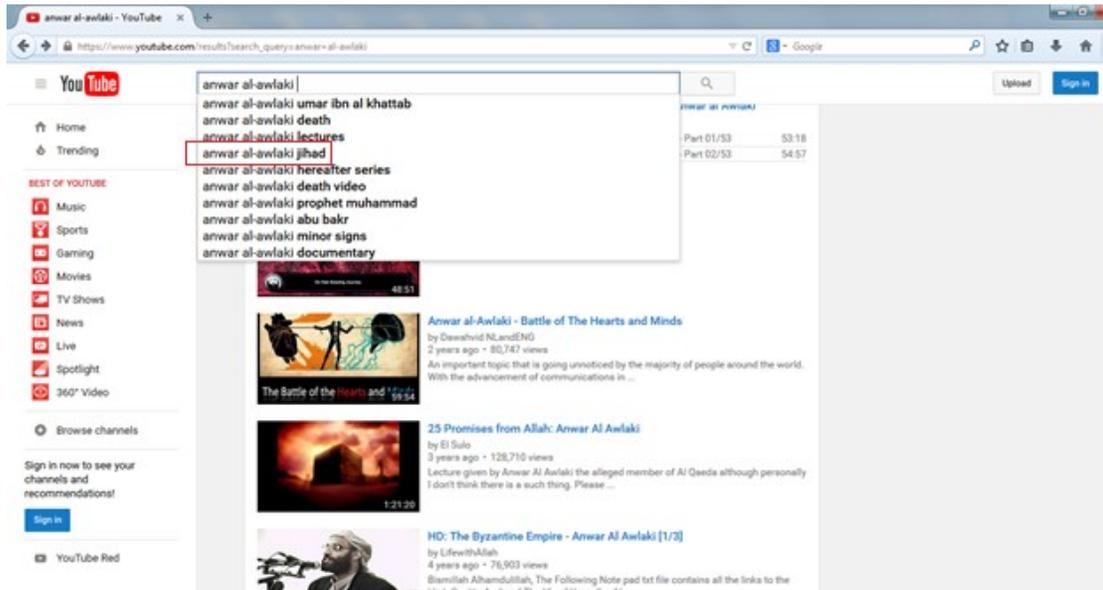


YouTube’s features – (1) autofill, (2) autoplay, and (3) its sidebar – expose viewers to al-Awlaki’s extremist content. The first feature, **autofill**, suggests related terms in YouTube’s search engine. The second feature, **autoplay**, queues related content to play immediately after a video ends. The third feature, **sidebar**, recommends similar videos. Each of these features serves to lure users to al-Awlaki’s more extremist content.

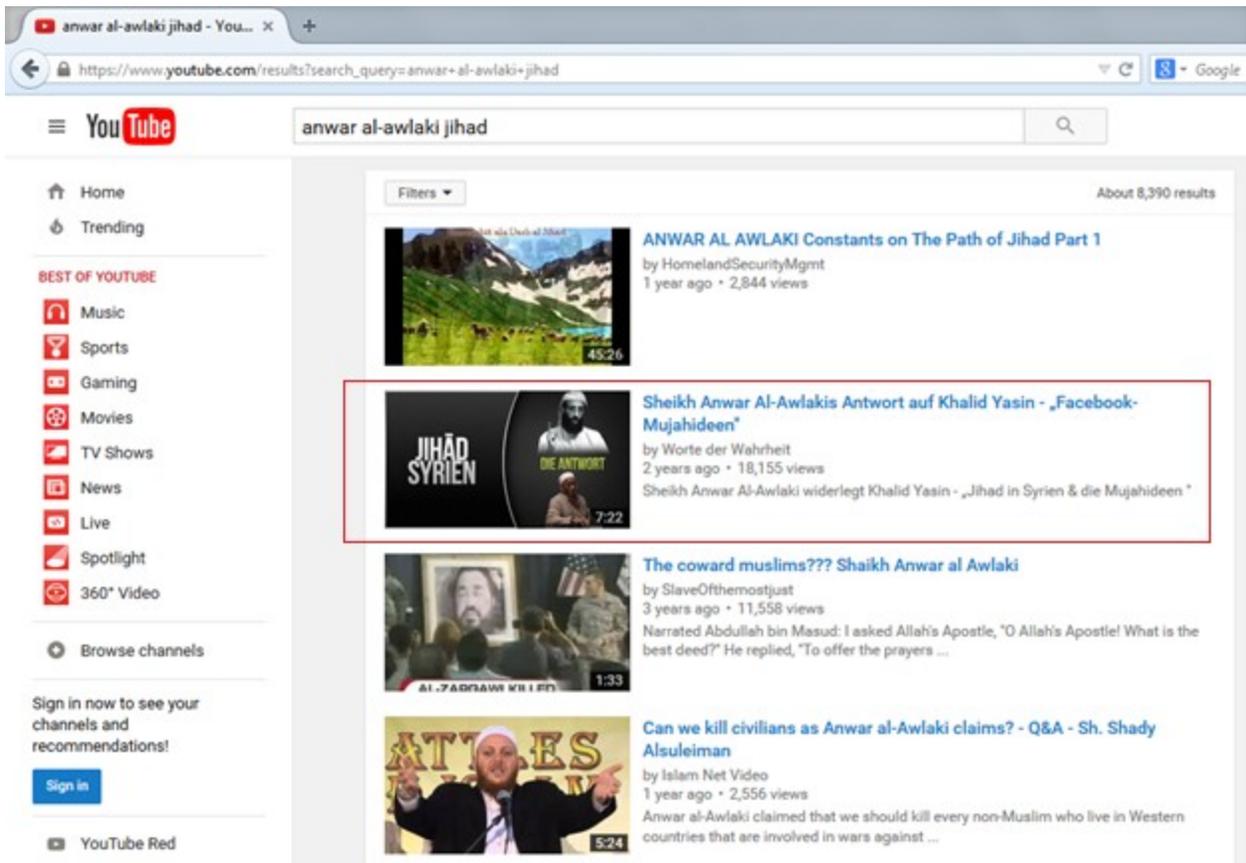
1) **Autofill (a feature that suggests related search terms):**

- a. When typing Anwar al-Awlaki, one of the first YouTube autofill options is “Anwar al-Awlaki jihad”

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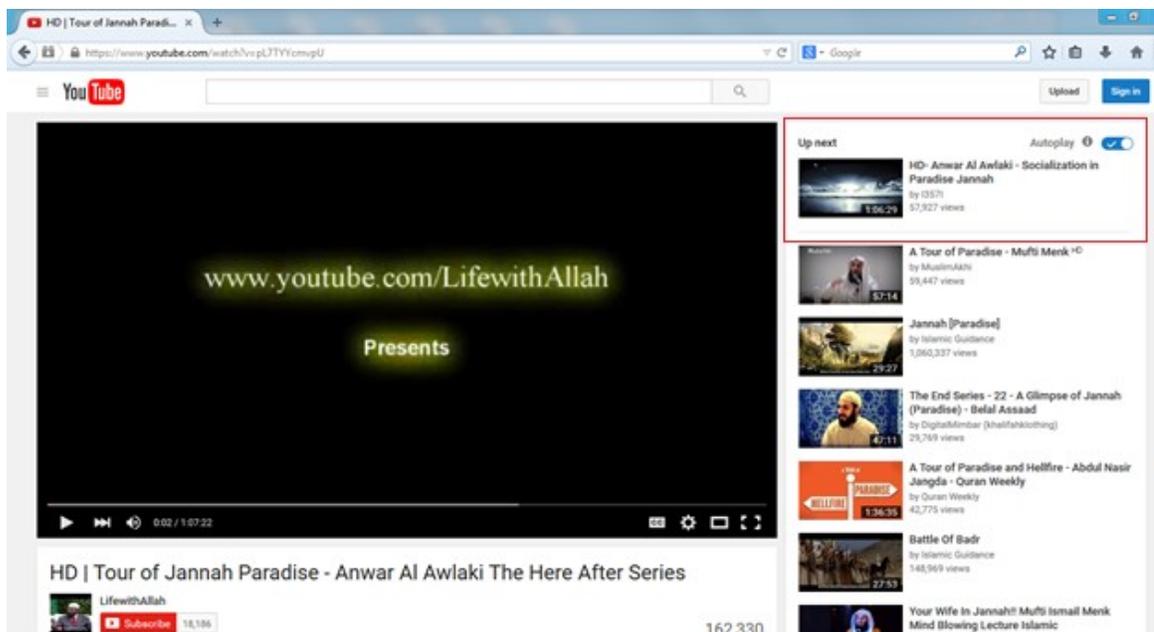
- b. The fourth entry for the autofill “Anwar al-Awlaki jihad” search is a video that uses selections from Anwar al-Awlaki’s lectures to advocate for violent jihad.



Excerpt from “Sheikh Anwar Al-Awlakis Antwort auf Khalid Yasin - „Facebook-Mujahideen”” ([video](#)): “[Jihadists] are not doing [jihad] for their own benefits. This person could otherwise be a successful doctor or engineer or businessman. He could be making a living for himself and for his family. But he went out for the sake of you. And then this is how he is treated. He is betrayed, his wife is betrayed, his children are betrayed, and not only that, but people are going to go on the media... talking about him. When he has given his life for the sake of the Ummah [Muslim community]”

2) **Autoplay (a feature that queues related videos to play after a video ends):**

- a. Even if a user is clicking on some of Anwar al-Awlaki’s non-violent materials, YouTube’s autoplay feature immediately exposes the viewer to al-Awlaki’s extremist and jihadist materials through its recommended section.
- b. For example, if users click on one of al-Awlaki’s most popular videos – “[Tour of Jannah Paradise](#),” leaving YouTube on autoplay mode will bring you to the following videos:
 - i. First, “Anwar al-Awlaki – Socialization in Paradise Jannah” ([video](#))



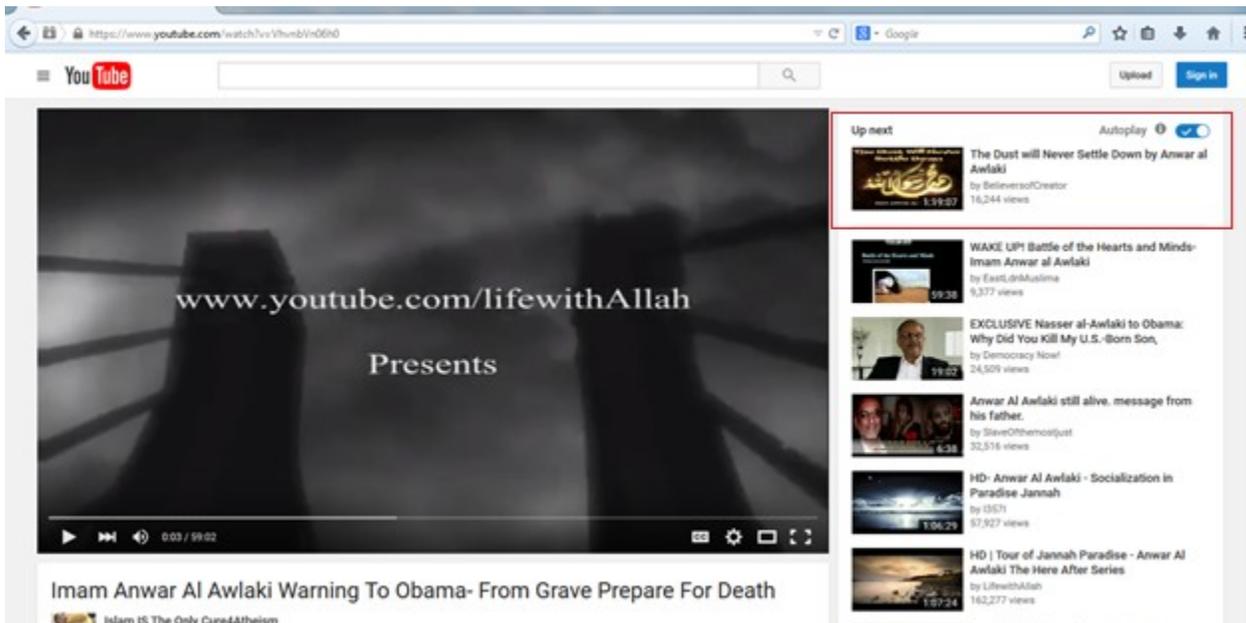
- ii. Then, “Imam Anwar Al Awlaki Warning To Obama From Grave Prepare For Death” ([video](#))

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Excerpt: “The only justified war is jihad”

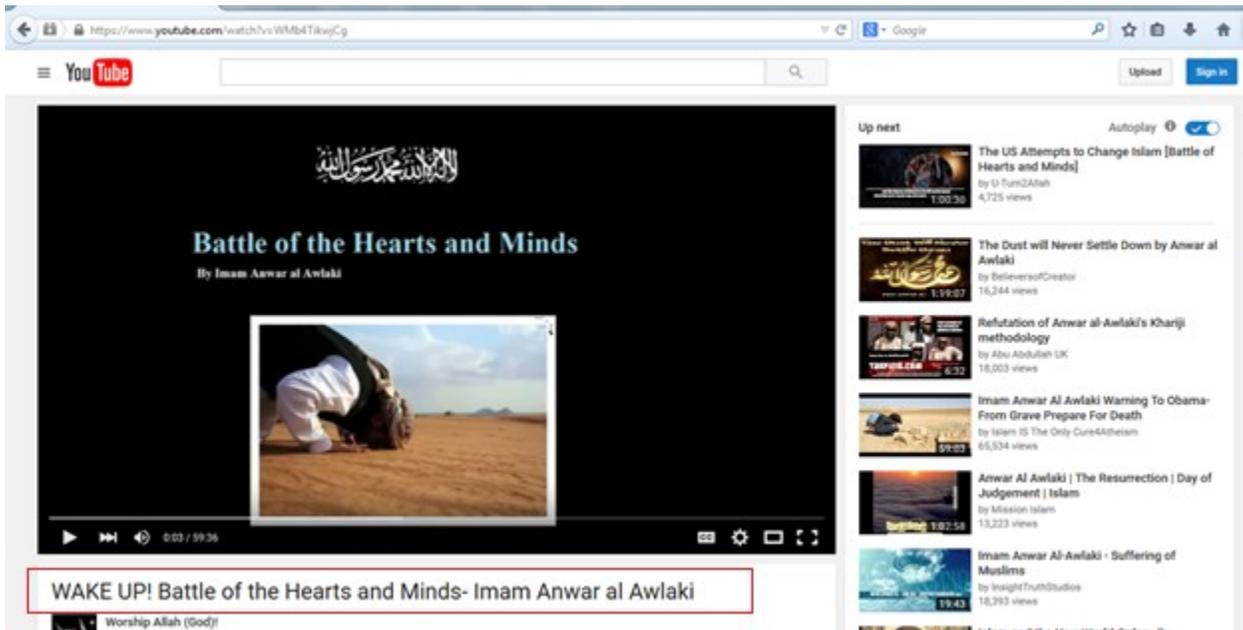
iii. Then, “The Dust will Never Settle Down by Anwar al Awlaki” ([video](#))



iv. From there, viewers will be encouraged to view “WAKE UP! Battle of the Hearts and Minds- Imam Anwar al Awlaki” ([video](#)).

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Excerpts from Anwar al-Awlaki's "Battle of the Hearts and Minds":

"Dear brothers and sisters we are not only victims, of U.S. military and political aggression, but we are also victims of U.S. lies! They have been lying about our brothers, charging them with false accusations, until they put hatred of them in our hearts, and they have planted the seeds of disunity

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amongst us! ... [we] are victims of this Western media and U.S. lies. We need to be aware! We need to be careful.”

“Miss Bernard and her cronies at Rand [Corporation] and [the] Pentagon should know that their plan would fail because Allah is the best of planners! And that the fundamentalists and extremists, whom they despise, are not only going to win in Afghanistan and Iraq, but they will continue their march, until they drag your people, the Jews, out of the Holy Land and plant their black banners on the roof tops of Jerusalem.”

“[W]hat I really fail to understand, is how can the martyr, the Shaheed, who willingly and happily, hands over his soul to Allah, who walks towards his faith, with pleasure, and faces death with a smile, what I fail to understand is how can you call such a person a ‘coward’!”

- 3) **Sidebar (lists recommended videos on the right hand side of the screen under “autoplay”):**
 - a. When watching any type of Anwar al-Awlaki content, videos that incite to violence like the ones described above, and others, often appear as a recommended videos in YouTube’s sidebar.
 - b. Even when clicking on a [video](#) as innocuous as CNN’s reporting of al-Awlaki will link on the sidebar to al-Awlaki’s “Battle of the Hearts and Minds.”

