

FIGHTING TERRORISM:

What Motivates Terrorists?



Left: The September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City

Above: The 2004 train bombing in Madrid, Spain

A Stebbins High School WebQuest constructed by Amber Davis (English Teacher) with contributions made by Christine Marino (ART), Rob Montgomery (ENG), and Angie Nickell (Soc. St.)

Defining Terrorism:

1. The unlawful, systematic use or threat of violence by a person or group as a means to intimidate or coerce societies or governments



2. Unlawful acts of violence that promote large-scale fear.

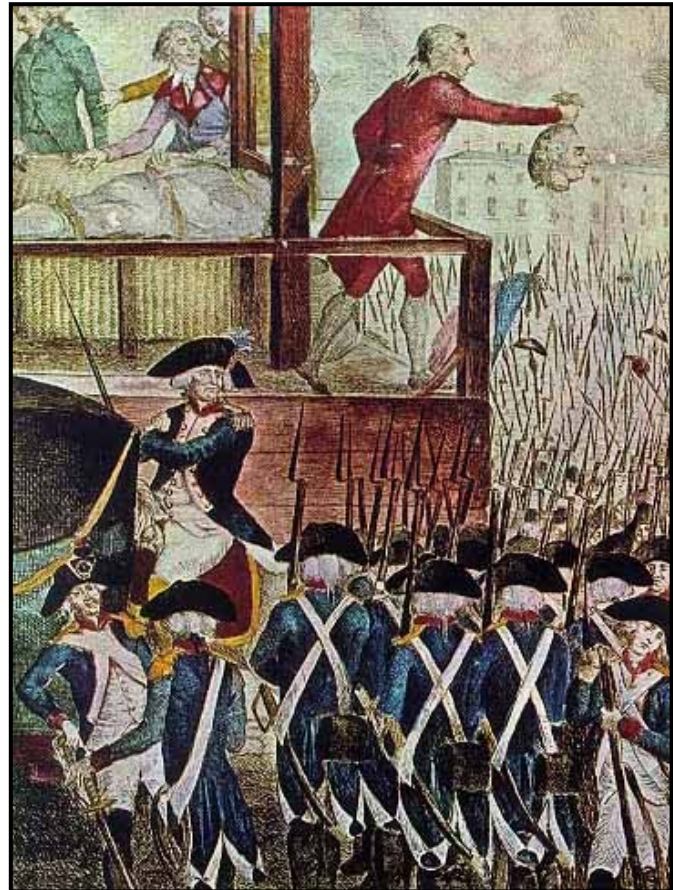


Above: The Rack, an instrument used during the Spanish Inquisition to stretch a person's body while (s) he was still alive

Left: The Pear, an instrument used during the Spanish Inquisition to internally injure people

Introduction

Terrorism is by no means a new concept. The history of terrorism dates back to the ancient Greeks and Romans. It includes violent incidents such as the Spanish Inquisition and Robespierre's Reign of Terror. Some people even consider the time period just after American Civil War a terrorist time because it was then that the Ku Klux Klan was formed. Today when people think of terrorism they often refer to incidents like the September 11th bombing of the World Trade Center and the explosives used to destroy four trains in Madrid, Spain.



Above: The beheading of King Louis XVI during the French Revolution

The Problem

A nation cannot properly fight terrorists until it knows what motivates them. However, that is precisely the problem that many people have: they cannot relate to why terrorists attack.

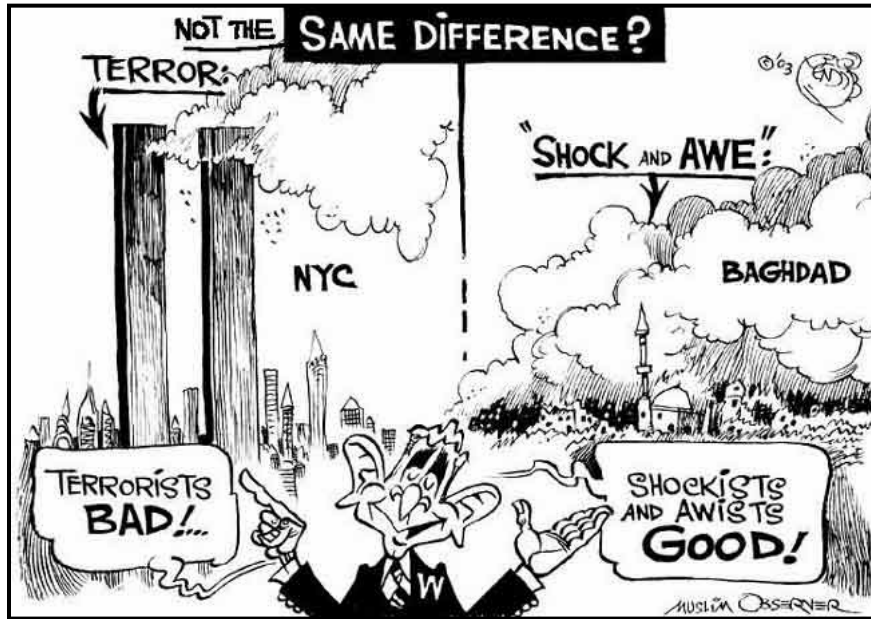
Although there are many theories, people often think terrorists are motivated by religion. But is that assumption true?



Above (both R and L): Photographs of the Ku Klux Klan burning crosses

Below: A political cartoon depicting President George W. Bush comparing the events of September 11th to the events during the War on Terror

Keep in mind what one person considers a freedom fighter could be what another person considers a terrorist.



The Essential Question:

Are acts of terrorism committed by extreme Islamic groups against the western world examples of religious warfare?



Above (both R and L): Photographs of Muslims praying

The Task:

Basically, your task is to **decide whether or not terrorism is always religious warfare.**

After researching and making an informed decision, you will **present your findings to the class in a PowerPoint presentation.**

Below are the steps you will need to take in order to do that.



Above: Staff Sergeant Ivan Frederick sitting on an Iraqi prisoner

The Process:

1. Choose a partner.

2. Carefully decide who will assume what role during your investigation.

- You will need a **Domestic Advisor**, the person who will represent the United States' perspective.
- You will also need a **Diplomatic Advisor**, the person who will be sure the terrorists' motivations are being considered.

3. Both the Domestic Advisor and the Diplomatic Advisor need to find four to five sources of information so that your group can make an informed decision on whether or not terrorism is always religious warfare. (*That means you will have a total of eight to ten sources.*)

- Each group member's sources should represent their particular interests (diplomatic or domestic).
- You may wish to utilize Chapter 29 of your World Studies textbook.
- You may use Internet resources, including but not limited to the websites listed below.
- You may want to find primary sources such as the Bible, the Koran, photos, articles, speeches, artwork, music, etc.
- You will definitely need to interview a credible source such as a priest/ pastor/ rabbi/ etc., a political figure,

someone in the military, a teacher, or someone else of your own choosing. Be sure to tape record or take extensive notes on this interview so you can use it later!

4. You will develop a five to ten slide PowerPoint presentation presenting your findings and your final decision about whether or not terrorism is religious warfare.

- Be sure to present both the diplomatic and the domestic perspectives when making your PowerPoint.
- Be sure to include your group's conclusion to the essential question.
- Be sure to give at least two quotes from your interview.
- When your group presents your PowerPoint, both the Diplomatic Advisor and the Domestic Advisor must speak. Make sure you present both sides of the same argument.
- The end of your presentation should have suggested solutions to ways we could ease the threat of terrorism.

5. Your final step is to write a business letter/ major paper – individually – to the President of the United States. This letter should explain not only whether terrorism is religious warfare, but



also what you think may be the solution to terrorist problems in the world.

Resources:

For a map of active Islamic areas in the Middle East go to...

http://www.cqpress.com/context/articles/cqr_islamic_worldmap.html

For a basic understanding of Islam go to...

http://www.rethinkingschools.org/special_reports/sept11/16_02/what162.shtml

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/09/0910_muslimkids.html

For an English Translation of the Koran go to...

<http://albany.edu/history/middle-east/religion.htm>

For articles on Fundamentalists, Islam, and the War on Terror go to...

http://www.cqpress.com/context/articles/cqr_islamic_want.html

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week504/cover.html>

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week506/perspectives.html>

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week602/cover.html>

http://www.crf-usa.org/terror/islamist_terror.htm

For terrorist group profiles go to...

<http://library.nps.navy.mil/home/tgp/tgpndx.htm>

For an article on suicide terrorism go to...

http://www.janes.com/security/international_security/news/usscole/jir001020_1_n.shtml

For articles on the United States' involvement in the War on Terror go to...

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/10/1007_endfree.html

<http://www.whiotv.com/news/3296250/detail.html>

<http://www.whiotv.com/news/3609734/detail.html>

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/05/12/iraq/main616921.shtml>

For an article on the media during times of crisis go to...

<http://www.crf-usa.org/terror/media%20and%20rumors.htm>

<http://washintontimes.com/commentary/20040621-095850-9332r.htm>

The Grade:

You will be graded on the following sections. Your teacher has your rubrics.

Group work (individual grade)

PowerPoint presentations (group grade)

Major papers (individual grade)

**ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION
FOR TEACHERS**

In Five Years We Want Students to...

- ...understand that different cultures have different perspectives on world events.
- ...detect bias, propaganda, and rhetorical devices.
- ...evaluate the credibility of sources.
- ...identify terrorism as a result of political, economic and social oppression.
- ...use a variety of communication techniques to present information that supports a clear position about the topic/research question.

This project meets the following Ohio Content Standards:

- Language Arts Standards (LA)**
 - Reading Applications
 - Research
 - Writing Applications
 - Writing Conventions

- Communication: Oral and Visual
- Reading Process



Social Studies Standards (SS)

- Analyze the results of political, economic and social oppression and the violation of human rights
- Examine regional and ethnic conflict in the post Cold War era
- Detect bias and propaganda in primary and secondary sources
- Develop and present research through a construction and support of the thesis statement