HST 203: History of the United States Sp14 (Escobar Meta 41237 41238)

Forum 3

Demonizing the Enemy

by **Joe Escobar** - Saturday, May 10, 2014, 11:01 AM

This forum thread is for Demonizing the Enemy posts and replies.

After studying the required materials, address the questions in your posts.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post.
To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it
RE: Demonizing the Enemy

Sum of ratings: - Edit | Delete | Reply

Demonizing the Enemy could be the greater evil

by Bart Golden - Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 10:29 AM

I understand that it's difficult to get even soldiers to kill without the dehumanization of the enemy. So of course that's the objective in demonizing. I think that if governments are going to use this type of dehumanizing the enemy then they need to take steps to protect their own citizens. Forsher was right when he expressed fear for innocent Arabs in the US. They have suffered unjustly. I think that it's wise to take a deeper look at the very people doing the demonizing because they could be shifting the blame from themselves or attempting to make it unpopular to think for yourself or speak out about possible involvement by those very people.

The article refers to George W Bush after 911 calling Osama bin Laden the evil one, yet if you look closer and with an open mind things seem unsettling with the whole idea that 19 middle easterners with razor knifes were involved in the 911 attacks at all. We must remain ever vigilant in our quest for the truth and seek out truth were ever it hides.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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A necessary evil?

by Austin Lawrence - Wednesday, May 14, 2014, 11:45 PM

As you said, dehumanizing the enemy is used to get the soldiers to be able to actually shoot at their opponents. I understand how thinking of them as other humans, the same as me, could make it significantly more difficult to pull the trigger. Sometimes though, the dehumanization occurs from someone committing "inhuman" acts. As an example, I think most people can agree that what Hitler and his men were doing in concentration camps was inhuman and evil. I think the problems occur from stereotyping. When an entire group/party/country/nation is dehumanized, it is in no way accurate.

With your modern 9/11 example, the same thing happens, an entire race is stereotyped, even those who were U.S. citizens. In some ways it's similar to what happened during WWII with Japanese Americans; even the man we saw in one of the videos who wanted to fight for his country (U.S. where he had lived his whole life) was not allowed to fight because he was genetically related to "the enemy." And so many Japanese Americans were forced to move to internment camps because of their race. Fortunately, this time around, it was not taken to the extreme of the Japanese internment camps.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Re: A necessary evil?

by Bart Golden - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 6:43 PM

I agree, there's no doubt that someone begins demonizing themself when they commit atrocities. However; I don't think that during World War 2 before the fall of Germany , anybody really know what was going on in the concentration camps. At least not from what I have read. I think that most did not until after Berlin fell.if that was the case then I would definitely see where we might need to demonize the Nazis. To most of us finding out about it in hindsight we don't notice the propaganda to demonize them.To us they did it to themselves.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Demonizing the Enemy

by Matthew Wunderlin - Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 12:14 PM

I think some of the unintended consequences of demonizing the enemy is definitely that you have the possibility of becoming a hypocrite. In the Demonizing the Enemy article it stated that in the Cold War, we would produce propaganda films to demonize Russia and the author proves the hypocrisy that can come along with it when he says, "When we were with the Russians, there were a number of films to show they weren't so bad," he said. "Then five years later, it was the opposite."

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Re: Demonizing the Enemy

by Serena Williams - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 8:33 PM

I definitely agree with you here, Matthew. There is definitely potential to become hypocritical when dealing with demonizing the enemy. When thinking about what has been said in these articles and what I have been reading online there are many instances where the propaganda has made peoples opinions on others more angry at them when the people themselves do exactly the same thing.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Demonizing the Enemy

by James Price - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 10:35 PM

I agree with your point. In World War 2 we had to create posters with pictures of Russians and a caption that pretty much said 'these are our friends, don't shoot them.' Then the Cold War comes and all of a sudden they become the greatest possible threat to the American way of life. The apparent flip-flopping of whether or not we like a particular country does seem to be partially hypocritical.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Intended/Unintended Consequences

by Miranda Townsend - Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 12:30 PM

One of the intended consequences of demonizing the enemy is it obviously creates war Propaganda that makes it easier for our troops to go to combat against other nations.

Some of the underlying consequences include fostering deep racist ideals and promoting them throughout society.

One example of this is the way they treat people of middle eastern decent at the airports. This blatant singling out and stereotyping of people based on our fear of "terrorism" has been seen in multiple instances since 9/11.

Here is a typical political cartoon about Osama Bin Laden shows outright demonization of him. I definatley think these types of images led to Americans being more on board with the "war on terror" and the rights affected concerning our privacy in the name of this "war."

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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reap what you sow

by Jennifer Rose - Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 5:17 PM

I agree and disagree with Pratkanis's statement about the differences between the portrayal of German citizens during World War One and the portrayal of Iraq citizens a decade ago.

The media does, or did in 2003 when Mr. James wrote his article, give a more sympathetic portrayal of Iraqi citizens than others in WW2. However the consequences of "demonizing the enemy", to borrow the author's verbiage, are more often than not destructive to innocent people, unnecessary, and get out of hand quickly. Demonizing the enemy produces a defensive and reactionary nation. The intended consequences of demonizing the enemy can be to build nationalism for it's own country and culture, and to focus the country's energies on defeating its enemies.

Being discerning and discriminating towards people who stem from a country that is an enemy of theirs in war is a natural, inevitable, and defensive reaction. Aggressive, racist, and xenophobic propaganda campaigns in the United States during WW1 ensured that the United States would be… well, aggressive, racist, and xenophobic in general.

In looking for modern-day forms of propaganda, I decided to think a little outside the box and choose some forms of propaganda that we may not recognize as propaganda, although they are. Displaying only what the maker of the propaganda wants you to see is a characteristic of propaganda. Exaggeration or distortion of the truth is another characteristic of propaganda. I looked up some anti-smoking propaganda on the internet to see if there was a common enemy that was demonized, and I noticed that tobacco companies are being demonized in these ads, as well as parents (particularly mothers). In my life, I have witnessed mothers being verbally harassed and dehumanized for being smokers, even if they are smoking far from their children.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Demonizing the Enemy Hurts Immigrant Nations

by James Price - Friday, May 16, 2014, 2:19 PM

While demonizing the enemy may help soldiers kill on the battlefield and fuels the fire of nationalism and patriotic fervor on the home front, it tends to produce a divisive atmosphere in a nation comprised mainly of immigrants. During World War 1 and World War 2 German-Americans weren't treated very well, Japanese-Americans were locked away in World War 2, and there was significant backlash against Muslims living the U.S. post 9/11 until we

bothered to make a distinction between all Muslims and religious extremists who happened to be Muslim. For an immigrant nation, demonizing the enemy often means demonizing part of your population as well, which, even unintentionally, can cause serious issues for years after the war is over and forgotten.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Re: Demonizing the Enemy Hurts Immigrant Nations

by Tran Nguyen - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 2:20 PM

I agree with you in this. Many times when conflict happens between countries, the immigrant civilians got all the hatred. People cannot sometimes tell that the civilians are apart from their own government's actions. The point you bring up apply not only then but also in today modern world. As China-Vietnam conflict is going on in China Sea, many riots have rise in Vietnam against Chinese immigrants, burning factories and hurting many Chinese families. This action of Vietnamese do not affect China in any massive level but just give Chinese the reason to use force on them.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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It is not what you think

by Cameron Holliday - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 8:18 PM

I have had many friends that have gone into the armed forces. Each one seems to come back from over seas with a different story. The one that stuck with me was a friend that told me about the first time he took another mans life. He said he dropped a mortor on a group of three insurgens and saw that he took their lives. He described that the first thing he could think about was when those guys were kids and just playing with a ball. So much innocence and never a thought of hate or anything of that sort. But he had been trained and told to believe that those people were nothing but pure evil. Anyone that wanted to take American lives was already considered dead. I can only imagine this back in the simpler times of the 1940's when demonizing the enemy was more popular than ever.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Re: It is not what you think

by Katie Birrenkott - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 10:16 PM

Your story about your friend is the exact reason that they demonize the enemy. It's not usually in the human nature to want to kill someone or something that is the same as yourself. By changing the posters to having gorillas was a way to show the soldiers and family that these people were not humans because they wanted to kill us. After all, who would want to be killed instead of killing another man in order to save your own?

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Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

Be aware!

by Thomas Stevens - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 11:14 PM

In war its kill or be killed. You're not going to play ring around the rosey with your enemy. They want to kill you, but you have better weapons and training and that is why we have an unfair advantage and why our enemy fights like terrorists. That's how they have to fight against our tactics. I completely understand this, but unfortunately few Americans have any comprehension of what I am talking about.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Supressing the guilt with Demonizing

by Serena Williams - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 8:28 PM

I think the intent of demonizing the enemy is to make it easier to hate and kill the opposing sides. If you see a human as it is it's harder to purposely hurt them but if you view a human being as a vicious animal or machine you can pretend it's not actually a person and dehumanize them to make yourself feel less guilty. Some unintended consequences of this could be that you'd be teaching younger generations to assume that everyone from a party or country that is being demonized are bad people. They could grow up with a bias that doesn't apply to everyone.

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