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**Demonizing the Enemy**

by Joe Escobar - Friday, May 8, 2015, 11:15 AM

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

After studying the required materials, address the various questions. 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](#)**Propaganda or American Hero?**

by Gordon Colver - Friday, May 8, 2015, 5:23 PM

In my opinion I believed American sniper can be seen as a source of propaganda in today's Hollywood. The movie while dramatic and emotional had the tendency to make the Iraqis Kyle was fighting into savages who only wanted to kill Americans (for example the man nicknamed "the Butcher"). The fact that the movie was such a big hit makes me wonder how it has affected people's views on the war in Iraq and on terror. I myself after watching the movie will say I felt like Kyle was doing a good thing and that he was very patriotic and a hero.



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Re: Propaganda or American Hero?

by [Nils Hagberg](#) - Sunday, May 10, 2015, 8:15 PM

To be honest I have never seen this movie, but being a movie fanatic I had to do at least my reading on it. Yes the movie does sound like a great patriotic movie, that tells the story of a great American War Hero, but I think there is a lot of bull behind glorifying war and killing people. As well has anyone thought within the year this movie was released we declared war against ISIS, and we opened up a new front of battle in Yemen which for a long time took our media a while to learn about.

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Re: Propaganda or American Hero?

by [Chaofan Huang](#) - Monday, May 11, 2015, 11:14 PM

i agree with Collver that Kyle American cowboy , after " 911" to 30-year -old he took part in the SEALs , and became an excellent sniper on the battlefield in Iraq . Eastwood cowboy spirit once again with the interpretation of the United States , from everyday life to battle everyday , no sharpening dramatic conflict , thought the war- hero , nor does it seek poetic wounds of war , it seems that only a simple childhood cowboy spirit supporting Chris all the way, and that is the heart of the United States Eastwood . That sentence is the wife , " if you think the war does not change you , then you are wrong ."

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Re: Propaganda or American Hero?

by [Nicolas Gibson](#) - Friday, May 15, 2015, 2:11 PM

I've yet to see the movie, and honestly do have mixed feelings having served in the military myself. Most military movies just have so many mistakes that it's too frustrating for me to want to watch it. Although I have heard good things from my old battle buddies, it is something I intend to watch.

Now, in my opinion, demonizing the enemy is a good tactic, but only when its used truthfully. While I served, I was lucky enough to never have seen combat, but I knew that if I did, I wouldn't hesitate to shoot first. They do stress at times that the people we're fighting today are people just like us, but people that threaten all American life. But they're people first. Win the hearts and minds, that is the goal. To turn them away from their 'evil' motives so they become peaceful once again. If we were fighting a country with an actual uniform, things would be entirely different, but without a uniform or country, we are forced to label all of that race a terrorist. There are of course backlashes, but knowing their motives is what drove me to want to be a part of the fight. The fact that there are people training right at this moment in hopes of killing one of us just because we are Americans is what drove me to fight this enemy. Karicatures aside, it is sometimes what the enemies goals are that spur the urge to fight.

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Re: Propaganda or American Hero?

by [Yiqing Xiao](#) - Saturday, May 16, 2015, 11:03 PM

Yes, I have not seen this movie yet and it is a strange thing to me that fight for others. I don't like military and I think those people who become a soldier is not wise enough. I hold such opinion because I think those soldier can not get any profit from the battle and the only reason they fight in fact is for the authority. Only the richer afraid to lose because poor people does not have many things to lose. Then the army is created, it created to protect the poverty from the richer and the stable of the rules. Both rules and poverty are controlled by authority and the authority use those things to affect others which one of the most influenced career is soldier. How unwise a person would be to sell his life to others? The only one you can recognize is yourself and others is just like a kind of npc, nothing is expensive than your life, it is your whole world. People should take responsible to themselves and only themselves and a country need people spend their lives should die. I think just like the only who believed the demonized enemy, soldiers are bewitched by the authority.

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Re: Propaganda or American Hero?

by [Jaalen Johnson](#) - Saturday, May 16, 2015, 11:30 PM

I absolutely think American Sniper was a form of propaganda, it was even effective, in my point of view. I think most of the war movies, video games, or commercials are very good at recruiting and/or earning military support. I would be lying if I said 'Call Of Duty' hasn't made me think about joining the war. The game makes everything seem so real, even easy to serve for your country. The movie does the same, it makes you imagine "what if I could become a hero for my country". Hollywood has perfected it's craft and i assume they will continue to thrive in helping war causes.

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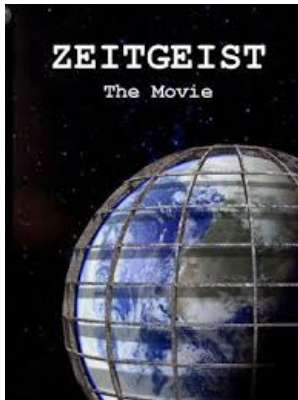


Re: Dehumanizing the Enemy

by [Emily Johnson](#) - Sunday, May 10, 2015, 6:16 PM

We see throughout history that it repeats itself because every decision made effects current events. If we aren't recognizing and learning from our past mistakes we are bound to repeat them again. I think it was an interesting correlation between 9/11 and WWII, especially after reading chapter 26 where it said a few Americans charged FDR with intentionally provoking Japan and leaving Pearl Harbor vulnerable in order to open a "back door" to war. In the movie Zeitgeist it proposes that 9/11 was an inside job. It is extremely difficult to imagine a president killing innocent Americans for the purpose of war but in the movie it really supports this notion that by uniting a country you must unite them by fear.

Sometimes political cartoons are a good way to portray the seriousness of war and to help Americans recognize the very real atrocities going on in other countries. I find it interesting that women are sometimes thought to be too emotional and therefore unable to make a rational decision; yet this is the basis of propaganda.



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Demonization the unnecessary evil

by [Andrew Duyck](#) - Monday, May 11, 2015, 12:19 PM

War has been necessary in the past, and probably will be again. Killing is another unfortunate piece that comes with war. Demonizing people makes it easier for soldiers to rationalize killing a fellow man in the time of war. When demonizing an entire race or country of people there can be massive amounts of backlash. Sure it may help the soldiers rationalize killing their enemy, and it may even help get some more recruits that just needed to hate the enemy a little more to push them over the edge. But at what cost? How long does this demonization last after the war? How many civilians are effected by the propaganda who would not have played any part in the war other wise? These demonizing ideas will be passed down through generations, and continue to effect people long after the war. This is separating the human race just so we can rationalize killing. I believe it is much harder to unify people than it is to separate them, so the sooner we can abolish the demonization of people, as a whole world we will be closer to unification. Demonization is a a tool that works, but with such negative side effects, it's not even worth using.

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Re: Demonization the unnecessary evil

by [Delaney Crook](#) - Tuesday, May 12, 2015, 2:15 PM

This idea that demonizing people makes it easier for soldiers to rationalize killing and also helps the recruiting of soldiers is most definitely a valid argument. I also believe that the demonization helps us, as citizens, justify what we are doing at war, as a nation, even though we are not the ones actually doing the killing. I completely agree with your thoughts that the aftermath of this demonization and killing makes it so the use of it is not worth it. We as citizens tend to create quick, yet long-lasting judgements on all types of people for many reasons. Because of this, the demonization we see is not just going to justify us killing them, but we are going to sustain this impression of the enemy for a long period of time, if not forever. This will force the continuation of separation among the world. I definitely agree that getting rid of this demonization would contribute to unification, but I also believe it is going to take much more than that, now that we have these thoughts and impressions of the enemy, that are going to be very difficult to readjust.

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Re: Demonization the unnecessary evil

by [Dominic Christianson](#) - Friday, May 15, 2015, 6:25 PM

I agree with both of you about the fact that Demonizing the enemy does make it easier for our soldiers to kill with out remorse to the enemy. I also want to go off of what Andrew said and say that I believe that after you Demonize a certain race they never really out grow those stereo types. They are pretty much stuck with them for life.

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Demonizing the Enemy and why it works

by [Jose Camarillo](#) - Monday, May 11, 2015, 3:58 PM

I felt that the consequences of demonizing an enemy was talked about early by Anthony Pratkanis, a psychology professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz who said, "The only way to do it is to justify the killing, to make the enemy look as evil as possible." In order to get your country behind something you have to give them reason, and by demonizing the enemy you give the people reason to want to take action. I agree with what Gordon Collver said about American Sniper and it being a propaganda movie. I feel like many of those military movies are in some way are a form of propaganda. Like James Forsher said, "That started breaking down in the early to mid-'60's," and goes on to say, "At this point, they're comfortable the government is not going to step in and tell them what to put in as far as content." I think many of these tools are effective in swaying the general public because that is who it is targeted at. Most of the general public generally isn't informed on a topic, and if they are they don't tend to really go in depth into that topic they just know the main points. So when they see the propaganda like a movie showing how awesome this sniper was or see how horrible the taliban really is from the latest news story they could very well be swayed.

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Re: Demonizing the Enemy and why it works

by [Delaney Crook](#) - Tuesday, May 12, 2015, 2:22 PM

I think this idea that we as citizens lack great knowledge and therefore are easily convinced by propaganda is a great contributor to why we demonize the enemy. If we attained greater background and knowledge on the subjects, this type of propaganda would not be as successful, because we would understand what to believe, and what not to believe. The media is very good at portraying the movies and grabbing our attention, yet we do not realize how it is affecting our thoughts and ideas. When the media demonizes the enemy, and makes it look as bad as possible, we are easily convinced that this is how they really are, because that is the only knowledge we have. We also take this a step further, because we create these biases and judgements based on this little knowledge, yet we still cling to these ideas, and make it difficult to change our thoughts, even if we are presented with further, or contradictory information. I am not saying that demonizing the enemy is right or wrong, but it is most definitely successful.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

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Re: Demonizing the Enemy and why it works

by [Yiqing Xiao](#) - Saturday, May 16, 2015, 5:08 PM

I agree with your idea about lacking knowledge. Standing by nowadays and look back, we would find there a lot of thing looks very silly because we get much more information than the people before so that we have more clear understanding. We can stay objective when looking at the past things because they are already gone and we will not stay in such situation anymore. For example , there is a movie called Schindler's List which talked about a story about a German save Jewish in WW2. It is really impossible to make such a movie during WW2. Only after the war and people calmed down,then they can doing something with their brain but not heart.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schindler%27s_List

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Re: Demonizing the Enemy and why it works

by [Andrew Duyck](#) - Friday, May 15, 2015, 3:03 PM

I agree with you in that demonizing the enemy works, however i think it comes with far too high of a cost to continue to implement it. Could the true reason our country is going to war be enough to persuade the general public to support the war? If the answer is no, we have to exaggerate truths and demonize the enemy to gain the support of the public. That means on their own the general public would not justify war and all that it entails, simply with the reason our government declared war. There will be times the government needs to rally and get support from the people, but can they do that without lying to or misleading us? A common enemy can be one of the easiest ways to unite people to act for a cause, but why we need to portray the enemy worse than they really are? Or as if an entire race of people are against us instead of a specific group within that race? I think the government should work harder to actually inform the people why we are going to war, and why they need more support in various ways when they do. People love this country with or without a common enemy and if they feel like the government is making a decision that is in the best interest of the country they will do what they can to support it.

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Still happening

by [Kai Seltman](#) - Monday, May 11, 2015, 11:27 PM

I feel the "demonization of the enemy" is happening even today. Immediately after reading the material for this subject, I went to a news site (CNN International) and clicked on the first article that mentioned the Middle East and/or Islam. I found what I knew I would, a stream of Islamophobic comments, such as those stating how no other religion is capable of the atrocities that Islamic terrorists commit under the name of Allah (which is not true.) I clicked on several more Islam-related articles of different news sources with the same results. For example, I found this gem right here that a commenter posted along with his remarks:



(I chose this specifically because it also illustrates the anti-catholic branch of nativism that Mr. Escobar often refers to in class.)

I have more immediate examples of the 'demonization of the enemy' as well. Today I was talking to a Saudi Arabian friend who attended a seminar that aimed to break down stereotypes associated with hijabs. She said that she felt it was a meaningful seminar, as a student confessed to her that he associated people wearing hijabs with terrorists.

Although the propaganda is not as blatant as it was during the First and Second World War, I believe the post-9/11 media has affected the way Americans perceive Middle Easterners and Muslims.

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Re: Still happening

by [Nils Hagberg](#) - Wednesday, May 13, 2015, 8:25 PM

Its a great tactic sadly for the media because it strikes home in American culture. We have tendencies as nation to be rash to those who stand on the opposite side. When we want to rally people to our side we show what ever flaws we can in the other as our first tactic. Sadly it works maybe it is up to the people to do research and have an educated opinion.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Demonizing the Enemy

by [Yiqing Xiao](#) - Monday, May 11, 2015, 11:54 PM

For those people who is lazy, demonizing the enemy is really helpful because it simply improved those people's confidence and cohesiveness. It also helped those people to bewitch people who is easy to trust others. However, it also had some bad effect such as you would become as silly as those people you described. Nowadays,there are less and less media doing such things, and those people who doing such things also is just for profits, and public do affected by the media but those people who is smart would never affected by others.

For instance, the interview is one of the best examples. Sony made this film to insult North Korean since they are the enemy of America,but those news before it released made Sony also become a joke in the world. Maybe it is a kind of skill to improve this films's sale, but after wacthing, you will find this film is really just so so because a good film would never rely on demonizing the enemy.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Interview_\(2014_film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Interview_(2014_film))

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Demonizing the Enemy At Present Time

by [Norman Stolba](#) - Wednesday, May 13, 2015, 2:52 PM

In my opinion much of this still goes on. But not to the degree of which it was happening back in WW1 and WW2. A lot of the war propaganda is now mainly expressed through Hollywood films, such as: American Sniper, The Lone Survivor, Black Hawk Dawn, Platoon, The Hurt Locker, Inglorious Bastards, etc. But there are also movies that somewhat counter these war propaganda films, such as: Schindler's List, Saving Private Ryan, Letters of Iwo Jima, Band Of Brothers, etc. These counter films tend to be more realistic and show and express both sides of the confrontation. I realize that all of these films have some sense of demonization, but without any sense demonization, I believe it would more difficult to make a war based film. I am not saying you can't make one without demonization, but I am saying it would be way harder to develop a war film that does not demonize Americas enemy to even the smallest extent.

I think demonizing works during war, but only temporarily, because if there are long last effects who knows what the potential consequences will be. If there were no sense of demonization it would be more difficult to kill a human being during war from a soldiers perspective, although not impossible, just more difficult.

Arabs I have noticed today still get made fun of for being Arabic due to the fact of 9/11, and all the negative media attention that U.S. citizens receive from the middle east via television. It is all but negative towards arabs, and only shows the negative aspects of the middle east. It is not a true depiction of their people, yet a lot of people here in the United States believe it is because that is all they're exposed too and that is all that the media focuses on. Well why? Because without demonizing, news may seem boring to some people. I don't think that, matter of fact it would be cool if news focused their attention on things more positive or out of the ordinary from typical old news. So I truly believe that television, movies, media, play a big part these days especially in swaying public opinion, that's why it's our jobs, to do the following research and ongoing review to take the extra steps to try and understand, and not just be satisfied with what the media tells us. If people

only relied on television, media, films, posters, than we'd have a very limited scope on everything.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Demonizing the Enemy At Present Time

by [Delaney Crook](#) - Thursday, May 14, 2015, 8:17 PM

I find your comparison of films in today's society and the demonization of the enemy very interesting. While I have not personally seen the films you listed that counter the propaganda war films, I do agree with your that it would be very difficult to create a war movie without demonizing the enemy, because there would be no conflict of interest to go to war for. I think where we get ourselves into trouble is when we, as citizens and viewers of these films, take them completely as they are and believe that that is how it actually is in the really world of war. This leads us to further hatred and demonization of the enemy in real life, and therefore creates longer lasting problems and effects in our world today. I believe if we are able to watch these propaganda films with the idea in mind that it is just that, a film, with some knowledge and truth to it, we will be better off in understanding what war is really like, and knowing that these producers have to demonize the enemy in order to make the film appealing to the audience.

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Re: Demonizing the Enemy At Present Time

by [Yiqing Xiao](#) - Saturday, May 16, 2015, 4:13 PM

I think your opinion about the long last potential consequences by demonizing works during war is really interesting. In fact, we can find a lot of example nowadays to study it. For example, the film Inglorious Bastards is directed in 2009 which passed the WW2 over 50 years, the film is still demonizing enemies. I don't think they do that for supporting the war, they are making such movie to earn some money from our pocket, and this is really funny because from such thing you can found that nowadays a lot parts of us still have some bias and that is why they make such movies. What's more, this kind of movie improved our bias in a silly way. On the other hand, this kind of movie is not our only choice in our society, they need money to publicize it. So it is your own choice to affected by them. However, a mature human should not affected by others.

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Earning Support

by [Jaalen Johnson](#) - Saturday, May 16, 2015, 11:21 PM

The intended purpose of "demonizing the enemy" is to make it easier for soldiers to kill, earn the support of civilians, and create fear in the civilians.

When someone is demonized and made to look evil I can certainly see how it would be easier to kill in war. If someone is depicted as savage gorillas (Spanish-american war) it's easier to justify killing. Which is in turn a consequence of "demonizing the enemy" IT MAKES IT EASIER TO KILL. If that doesn't sound wrong what else does? Killing isn't okay so we shouldn't want to make it easier.

The other way we see the media "demonizing the enemy" is with the bloody knife. This is used to strike fear in the hearts of civilians so they are more willing to buy war bonds, join the army and many different things. The bloody knife is a common trend that we've continually seen throughout this term. Using the bloody knife is certainly effective.

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