

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

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## Forum 3

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### 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.

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IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it

RE: Demonizing the Enemy

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### Easy targets

by Sherri Patterson - Saturday, May 10, 2014, 8:27 PM

One of the most current demonizing the enemy and easiest targets I would say is President Obama. People who are not happy with his presidency often demonize him and portray him as the enemy. He is an easy target. But our president have historically been easy targets to demonize you can see it time and time again. When something goes wrong in society, who do we blame but our leaders! We look to them for guidance and when things go astray they are the first to be blamed. So we start demonizing them or make them look like fools. In doing so we hope to sway public opinion. Sometimes it works, but sometimes it just makes their supporters back them even stronger.



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**can't have your cake and eat it too...** P S

by Morgan Reid - Thursday, May 15, 2014, 7:42 PM

I completely agree with you. People who aren't thrilled that Obama is our president will stop at nothing to portray him as the enemy. The economy isn't ideal these days so we have to blame someone, right? Of course Obama is an easy target! It's true, our leaders are always the first people we point our fingers at when something goes wrong; the last thing we want to do is blame ourselves.

However, we need to remember that as a nation, we essentially chose our president. Now, this doesn't go for the people who didn't vote for Obama. Im talking about the people who were pro Obama until things went awry. By suggesting that he's the enemy, it's almost like saying we're the enemy, too because we stood behind him, knowing what he was capable of.

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### Re: Easy targets

by Daniel Halverson - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 11:32 PM

I agree all the way that President Obama is demonized a lot for the simple fact he is our president, but also like you said because he is the leader of our country. Another thing that makes not only Obama an easy target to demonize, but every leader that is elected had other people vote for someone else so no matter who is in the role of leader, there will always be those who disagree or do not like a lot of things a leader or president is elected due to some people who wanted a different leader. Even though we as a people get to vote for who we want, not everyone wants the same leader so demonizing is almost impossible to avoid.

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### Consequences of demonizing an enemy!

by Anh Nguyen - Sunday, May 11, 2014, 3:54 PM

As a lot of us might notice, when Osama Bin Laden was one of the world's number one enemy, he was demonized to the maximum level during his appearance not long ago after the 11/9 event. When president George W. Bush was still in power, he once vowed to smoke Bin Laden out of caves and holes. The Bush administration was doing its best to demonize and degrade suspected terrorist Osama to rally support for retaliation and what Americans' appetite for bringing the exiled Saudi Arabian millionaire to justice "dead or alive". Bush often used dehumanizing terms to describe the terror, implying him and his fighters (Al Qaeda) as loathsome animals. "They run to the hills; they find holes to get in. And we will do whatever it takes to smoke them out and get them running", said Bush. But this was not the first time a president had demonized an enemy. Former presidents Bill Clinton and George Bush did so against Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. The elder Bush even compared him to Hitler and sometimes gave the name "Saddam" a snarling, nasal pronunciation. Dehumanizing an enemy is not only a common practice for leaders seeking to steel their countries for military action, "it is required", said one of the defense analysts. It is required to raise the country's profile in order to prevent other countries from not seeing the acts of the U.S seriously. That is supposed to be the intended consequence of demonize an enemy, however, everything has its own problem. Personalizing an enemy also carries risks. Once you demonize an enemy, you rev

up expectations, and you also set the stakes inappropriately high, because you've got to for the guys, the enemies, the "demons". Notice that despite the rhetoric leveled at Saddam, he remained his power until 2003, 13 years after the Gulf War. Exactly the same that happened to the Bin Laden case, the terror was arrested and killed just recently, which meant about not fewer than 10 years after Bush declared the demon phase to him. Dehumanize the enemy's term is not only used by the U.S alone, but also by just any individual who wishes to conquer an enemy. Even though it does bring many disadvantages for the antagonists, however, individual who brings up the term will have to pay for it by successfully "kill the demon", eventually, no matter what methods they have to use. And by that, innocents might get hurt, and will get hurt. Back to the Bush's case, some suspected that Bush wanted to start a chemical war when he mentioned "smoke Osama out of the hole", and though it did not happened, there was still chances that it would. Few people back then were ready to criticize him and his advisers for using strong language; given the enormity of the slaughter of innocents that French president had called "beyond crime... there are no words to qualify it."

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### Six-year old's dream come true!

by Kira Iantorno - Monday, May 12, 2014, 3:09 PM

The intended result is obvious, to create a mainstream belief system that political parties can use to accomplish an agenda. There are multitudinous of unintended consequences, first and foremost is ignorance. I relate this most to fairy tales, when fairy tales introduce a villain their personality is skin deep. They will be made to look evil and have an affliction to one of the seven sins. This is not helpful when trying to decide how to solve a problem, when usually the problem is solved with killing the villain. Also a problem occurs when villains we slay will have allies and are then also placed under the same trope.

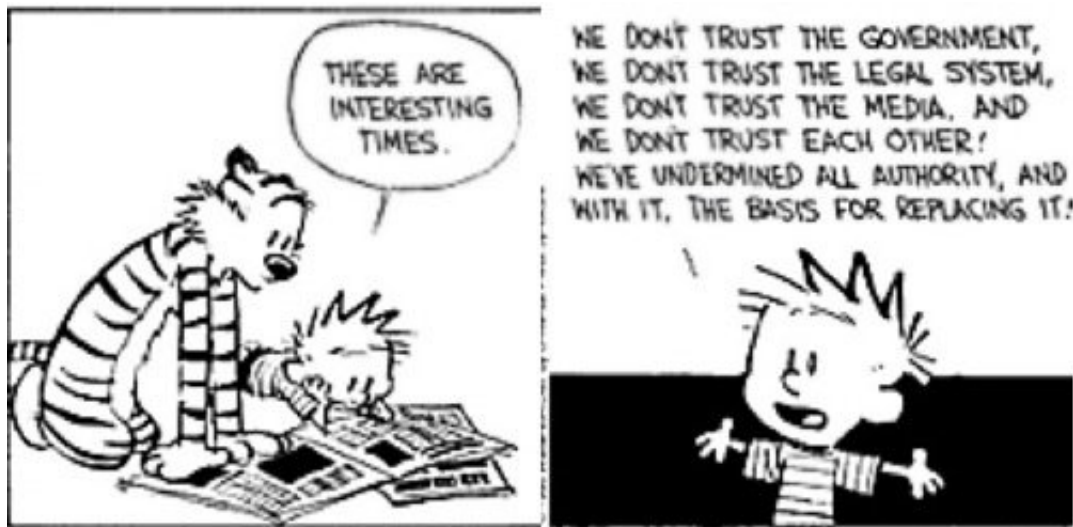
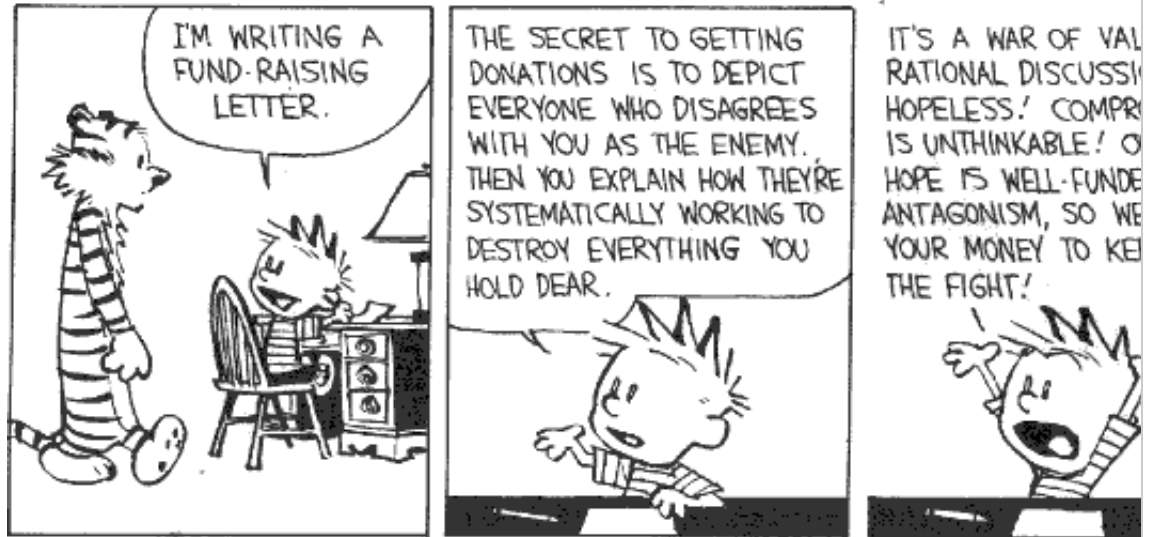
"The functions could also be spread out among several characters. If a dragon acted as the villain, but was killed by the hero, another character (such as the dragon's sisters) might take on the role of the villain and pursue the hero."(Wikipedia)

Today we have held on to these childlike ways of problem solving because it is much easier to go to war with a villain than just another human. Much like in the article talks about describing them as animals.

"When you dehumanize, it allows you to kill your enemy and no longer feel guilty about it," he said. "That is why during World War II, a lot of caricatures became animals. & You can kill a monkey a lot more easily than you can kill a neighbor."

These are the reasons we have continued this tradition with war, political campaigns, and general opinions. Until we are able to see there are no villains no heroes only knowledge on what is going on in the world we will continue to only see skin deep.

We cannot say we are educated on something with only buzz words and pretty pictures, fairy tales don't educate.





### The villians sister

by Mitchell West - Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 8:33 AM

while i agree with your point, your fairy tale analogy allows me to bring up a question, you mention the the dragons sister might become the villian, the big problem with demonizing the enemy is that you end up demonizing innocents and those the think an injustices has been done to them such as the sister or in our world the soldiers who were forced to fellow orders to survive. there are many who dont want to fight but must, or who are fighting for a good cause but we see them rebelling or endangering our interests so we must demonize to get support for killing them. so be careful about how you demonize least we find that the real demons are ourselves

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### Re: Six-year old's dream come true!

by Anh Nguyen - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 11:56 PM

Your response has the same point of view with me. While demonizing the enemy is effective in some way, it also costs the life of many innocents people, according to your example of the dragon's sister. Such problem can easily be view in today's society as a form of stereotype. For instance, many terrorist attack's victims and their families have seen Muslim as an "evil religion". I have seen some propaganda posted by few of my Arabic friends (picture below) stating their points toward those stereotypes. It's understandable that dehumanizing an enemy is important and even somewhat essential for us to achieve the so-called "victory" that we want without thinking the affect that it would make on other innocent's lives.

أنا مسلم ... والإسلام دين كامل  
، ولكنني لست إنساناً كاملاً، إذا  
ارتكبت خطأً فلا تلوموا  
الإسلام ولكن لوموني أنا..  
I am Muslim , Islam is  
perfect , but I'm not . If I  
made a mistake , please  
don't blame my faith , don't  
blame Islam , please blame  
me !  
我是穆斯林，伊斯兰是  
完美的，但我不完美。如果  
我犯错误了，请不要责备我  
的信仰，不要责备伊斯  
兰，请责备我。  
Я

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### Demonization is almost second-nature



by Austin McQuaw - Monday, May 12, 2014, 5:29 PM

The intention of demonizing the enemy is to make them easier to kill. When you no longer see a person, but a part of an evil and opposed unit, it is easier to do the unwanted deed of killing a human. Demonization makes it easy to dislike a group. It also can have the unintended consequence of grouping together the good and the bad that make up a population. As James touched on in the article, we may have learned most about foreign cultures from wartime propaganda.

There's no doubt that demonization of the opposition occurs today. In the U.S., political figures and groups are constantly being depicted with harsh exaggerations.

I'd say demonization has been successfully used to sway public opinion. We feel very comfortable labeling people in some pretty nasty ways.

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### Re: Demonization is almost second-nature

by Daniel Halverson - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 11:40 PM

While I agree with most of what you said, one thing I don't all the way agree with is that demonizing is always used in a way to make it easier to kill a human. People in high positions such as presidents and other high elected officials are demonized all the time but not necessarily to have them killed. When demonizing something or someone in war, I would agree that is used to help kill easier. At the end of it all, demonizing of anything will only lead to negativity.

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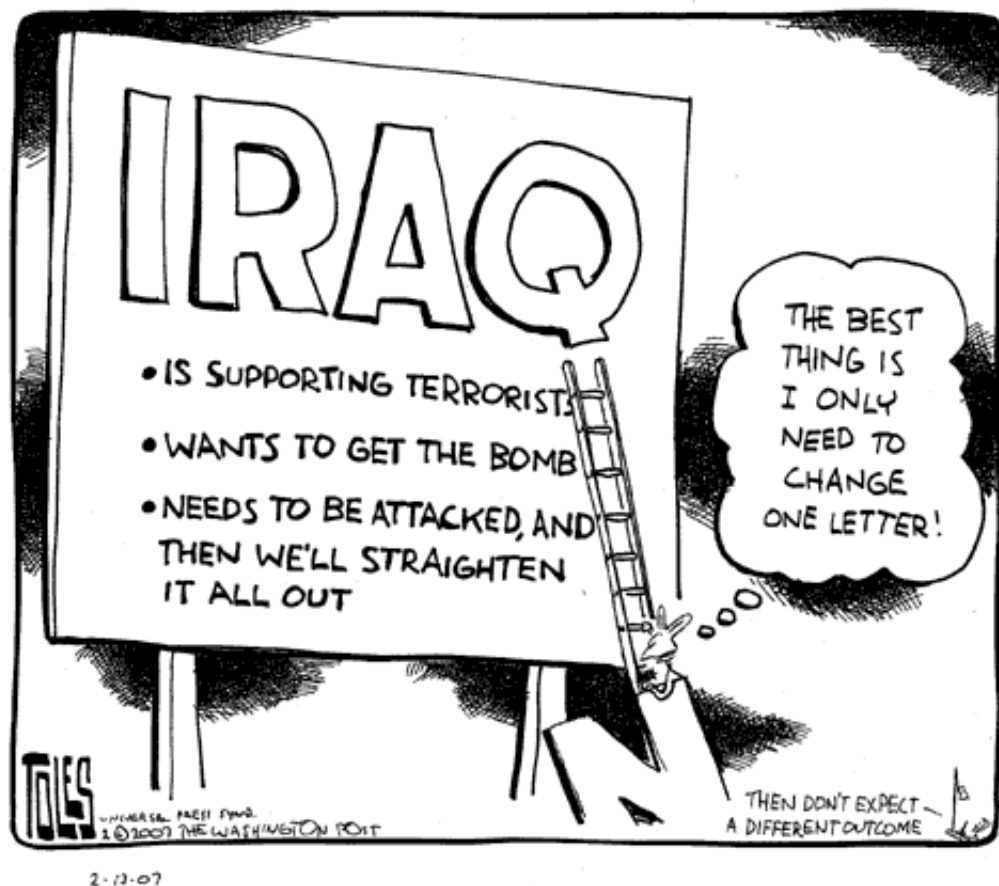


### Good vs. Evil

by Ren Rasmussen - Monday, May 12, 2014, 8:48 PM

The most intended reason for demonizing the enemy is to gain support for a cause to intervene in any conflict around the world. It all goes back to the fight with good and evil. What the "people of the U.S." justify as good usually is not happening over seas in European countries. We often see ourselves as being pure and our enemies as inhuman due to actions that have been committed by them, but at the same time our enemies view us that way. It then comes down to you is "right" and the country that wins the battle is therefor seen around the world as the "good guys."

The unintended consequences are that when a country dilutes the minds of its citizens of the enemy the whole race of people associated with them are henceforth demonized too. Everyone has stereotypes of specific countries due to historical events that their leaders have done with their country. When I think of German, Russia, and the Middle East my feelings of those countries people are very poor but its how I've seen and heard through the media/history I get this image of these people. I know its wrong of me to do this but I support America's role/actions done throughout history. I also have acknowledge that these countries have a negative view of America and its people, which includes me. As humans we often like to point fingers at others instead of ourselves, which can mark a countries people forever.



I believe this cartoon is very effective due to the fight against terrorism, not wanting more countries to get "the bomb"(atomic bomb), and to rally support to get troops on the ground to resolve the problem. Its very specific on where to send troops to solve the problem with the first two bullet points and it show that since we did this in Iraq it can be done in Iran. This can definitely swap the mass population of U.S. citizens due to the event September 11.

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### Demonizing the Modern Enemy P S

by Paige Nibley - Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 7:07 AM

The propaganda of both the first and second World Wars demonized the enemy in order to dehumanize the enemy. We now know that yellow journalists such as William Randolph Hearst published "fake atrocities" in order to anger citizens into a fight. In order for a human being to murder another, he would have to be convinced that it was somehow justified by the evil of the enemy.

There are three things that get to me in regards to this topic. The first is that this type of propaganda is so convincing and powerful that it, as Yale University history professor Jay Winters said, "allowed America to tolerate the internment of Japanese-Americans during the war." This fact is especially frightening because the human race today is the same as during WWII and the internment of Japanese-Americans. The

human race is deeply flawed. So who is to say, that with a little encouragement, this awful act of our past couldn't be repeated in similar form?

The second point that I found disturbing was also pointed out by history professor Jay Winter. Referring to the propaganda during war time, he claims, "This mobilization of hatred was so effective and powerful, that during the Second World War it made it difficult to believe the stories of the Holocaust." I found this especially unsettling because I have been taught of the incredible tragedy of the holocaust and it pains me to consider that American false propaganda took away the reality and gravity of such a devastating part of history. Both the internment of Japanese-Americans during WWII and disbelief of the events of the holocaust are unintended consequences of American effort to get everyone in the nation motivated to fight for the war effort.

The third thing that I find interesting and controversial is the reference to historical enemy in animated films. The clip shown in class that used animated frogs and mice to subtly depict the French and British shocked me. I have recently gained a new enjoyment for animated films because I feel like I better understand the humor as an adult. Many of the references in animated films would not be funny to a child as they don't have the background knowledge required to understand the humor. The reference in the movie shown in class is especially dubious and, if I'm being honest, I would have been oblivious to the historical reference had it not been pointed out to me.

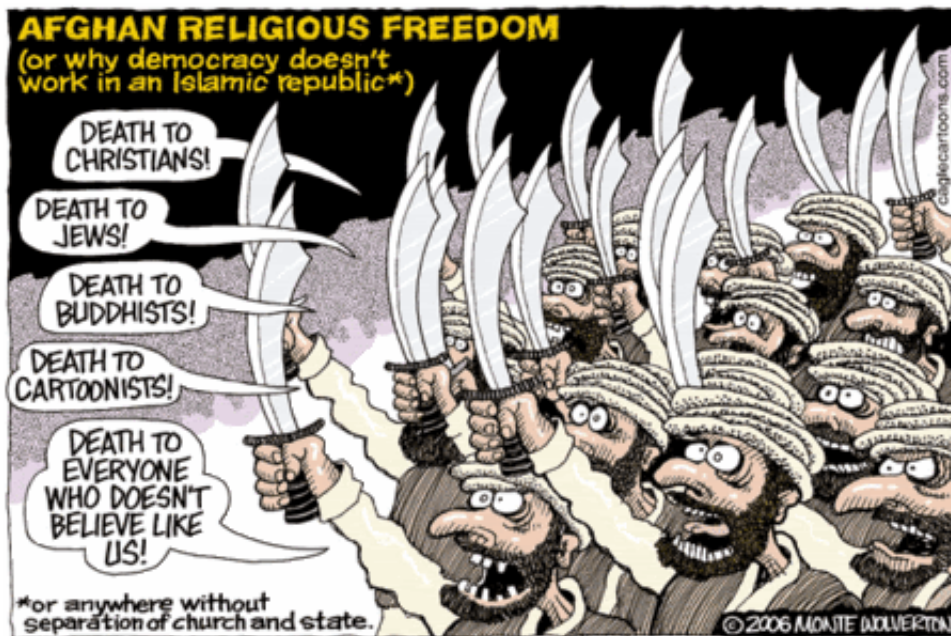
I attached a couple pieces of modern propaganda that I found familiar in today's standards. The cartoon and photo are examples of modern propaganda, its clear impact today and ability to sway public opinion. I am embarrassed to say that because emphasis on photos like these in the media, an Islamic man wearing a turban in the airport or even on the street would stand out to me more than another person. This is a sad stereotype I have involuntarily developed as a direct result of the material put out by the media. It serves as absolute proof that today, as during the Great War and Second World War of the 20th century, we use propaganda to demonize and dehumanize the enemy in order to sway the opinion of the public--and it works.



# MUSLIMS

Mujahadin Using Subversive Lies  
In Murdering Society

Politifake.org



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**sources of images above:**  

by Paige Nibley - Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 7:14 AM

radicalpress.com

drsanity.blogspot.com

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### Demonizing an Enemy

by Daniel Halverson - Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 9:17 AM

When someone demonizes an enemy, the intended purpose is to make that enemy not liked by a lot of people so when something is to happen to them one being demonized, less people are going to care and more than likely the majority will be ok with it. One unintended consequence is the possibility of demonizing possibly a whole group or nation at that and could lead to a lot more conflicting issues.

Current pictures and other propaganda I see a lot is against president Obama in attempts to make him look like the bad guy in this war going on. Past propaganda that influenced the whole country would be from WWII with the use of turning the Japanese and Germans into animals and creatures with knives full of blood. When the people saw these pictures they assumed that all Japanese and Germans were killers and vicious people when it was only supposed to show the soldiers not influence on how every single Japanese and German person was.

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2

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### Re: Demonizing an Enemy

by Mitchell West - Friday, May 16, 2014, 9:11 PM

there are alot of problems with demonizing the enemy but there are also many benifits to it too, besides making it easier to kill. in this age of gorilla warfare demonizing is a must, because you dont know if the kind old woman down the street might be hiding a enemy combatant or even a bomb, so while it might seem a little extreme to kill waves of possible innocents it has been shown time and time again that our troops die because they take pity on the small boy or old woman, instead of seeing them as threats they see them as people who need help. its the reason gorilla warfare works so well.

but on the flip side is as you have side daniel, after the war we carry the demonization with us long after the war, it isolates groups even more, makes us hesitant to help others, which while in war is a good thing but after is the exact opposite, we still show arabs as evil when they are people like us. also here is a poster that i think sums up your point well about obama daniel



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### Trading freedom for safety... Not a good thing

by Amanda Daniels - Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 10:01 AM

Going to war as we have learned is big business that is marketed the same way they market any other product they want you to buy... advertising or as they have once again so cleverly rename it propaganda.

If you're going to send your country off to war then you're going to need soldiers to fight in your army. Propaganda is standard protocol to get the citizens to back a war. One way to rally people together is to instill fear, if you make them believe their homes and their families are at risk they will fight to defend that.

Propaganda is absolutely used to this day and honestly in full swing. One of the biggest unintended consequence for us as citizens, I think is the freedom that every citizen is giving up during war time, which we have read about time and time again, and that clearly is once again a huge issue to this present day with the Patriot Act in full effect.

People want to feel they are safe and are unfortunately willing to give up anything to do so including their freedom. Thomas Jefferson said "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty



nor safety.”

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### **Re: Trading freedom for safety... Not a good thing**

by Ren Rasmussen - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 9:59 PM

Making anything personal really gets the attention to anyone was I agree that fear is the most impact full of all propaganda. When the threat is real and it could come to each and every home people do react and react how the propaganda wants them to. I believe the majority of everyone in this world are kinesthetic learns and through all these posts it become imprinted in every mind that sees them.

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### **Re: Demonizing the Enemy**

by Marcus Mcphaul - Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 10:20 AM

I understand why America did what it did when it comes to propaganda throughout our past, even though it was morally wrong and has left negative associations with different ethnicities that are still present to this day. It also got the American soldiers to kill without remorse and allowed the American government to do whatever they wanted over seas to foreign soldiers and civilians alike without backlash from the American people. The problem with this is post war when most people realize that the enemy isn't a bunch of bloody Russian gorillas then the American people will lash out to the government for the demonization it put on foreign people. But even worse is the people who never let these stereotypes go and live the rest of their lives with a fear/hatred of past American enemies. We are seeing this happen right now overseas in North Korea, they are preparing their citizens to feel no remorse for the American people (except Dennis Rodman of coarse) making it easy for them to justify killing us. Look at the soulless American devils point a gun at a innocent baby before they throw it down a well, if I saw an enemy depicted as such I would have little to problem with the government attacking them which is the soul purpose of propaganda posters.



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### Re: Demonizing the Enemy P S

by Ren Rasmussen - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 10:12 PM

When you state that American troops got to kill without remorse caught my attention. When viewing propaganda and any war getting someone to pull that trigger on another human being is a challenge but if its either you or them almost everyone is going to chose the other person. At the initial stage of war I believe troops want to get the taste of blood but as the war goes on troops get past that and start questioning it. When watching documentaries, history channel, and Band of Brothers what impacts me the most are listening to those you were there. Many of them hated the enemy and stated the only good hostile is a dead one but towards the end they lost sight of that. I remember one quote

that stuck with me from Band of Brothers was that he either saw a dead German or had shot him and thought that if there wasn't a war they could have been best friends. Had the same interests and the love of fishing but the war of higher men stopped that from ever happening.

The effort to get support in demonizing the enemy will mark that group of people for the rest of history. It is wrong but the cost of American peace to the world is a better place that I like to be in than if we did nothing.

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### What I learned about this conflict really surprised me.

by Zachary Ogborn - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 11:51 AM

First and foremost, I'd like to bring up the fact that a lot of video documentation has been coming out of the Syrian Conflict ever since it first began to escalate about three years ago. A good way to keep updated or gather information is to check out *Al-Jazeera* or the Youtube Channel *VICE News*.

I found this Political Cartoon this morning on the web, a simple google images search for "*modern Syrian political cartoons*" brings it up.

I feel that it does a very good job of Demonizing the 'Enemy' (*or wrong doer*) of this conflict based simply on its imagery. Bashar al-Assad is shown holding a weapon to a mother and child saying "*Women and Children first*" as a play off of the phrase used when fleeing a sinking ship, or evacuation of a burning building, etc. usually done out of honor and respect for the women/children. This is meant to show that the Assad regime is killing innocent civilians in its current civil war. Obviously allowing the viewer to see him as a baby killing, human rights violating dictator. Although I do agree with the primary message being depicted (*That Bashar al-Assad's government IS abusing its nations people*) the demonetization of only one particular player in this conflict makes the viewer immediately pick sides without knowing any of the details. That's what is so dangerous about imagery, broadcasts, etc. that demonize a perceived '*Enemy*' in my opinion.



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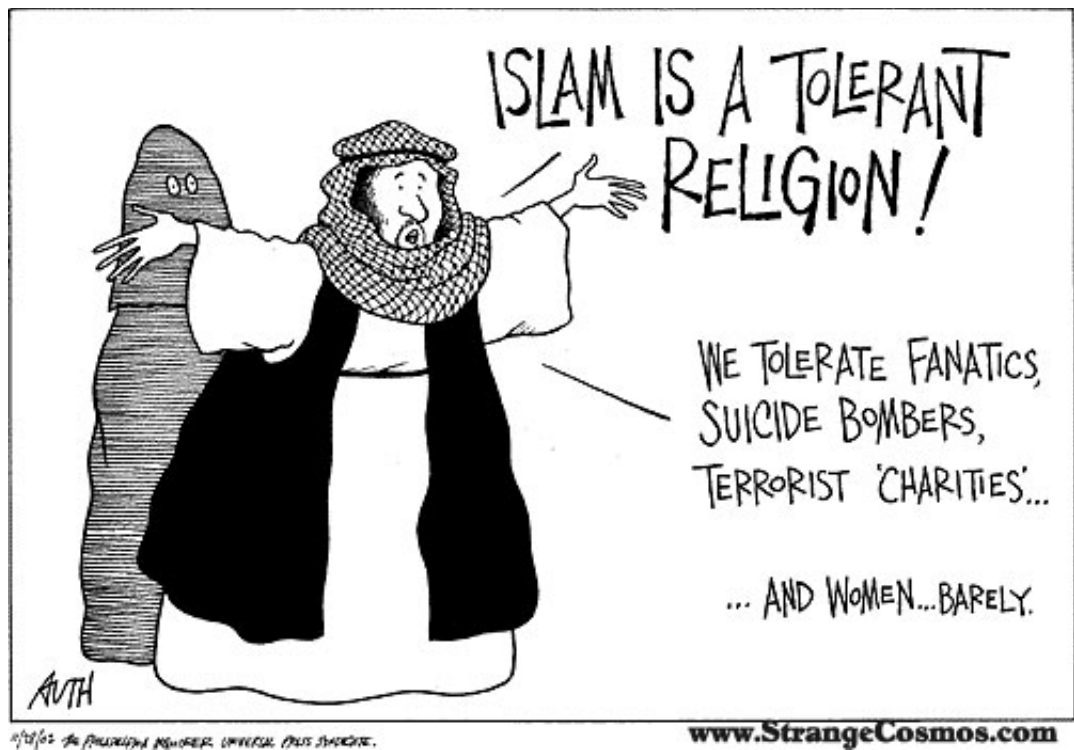
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### A Distorted View

by Roy Fernandez - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 9:47 PM

Based on what I've learned, the intended consequences of demonizing the enemy are to rally support for a war and to dehumanize the enemy. As mentioned in the article by Michael S. James, dehumanizing the enemy is a way of justifying the act of killing other human beings. The use of animals and portraying the enemy (Germany and the ape, the Japanese and the rat) as them is an example of this. Unfortunately, the unintended consequences of this are when an entire people, race, or nation begin to receive the same treatment as those villainous figures. This leads to the unfair judgment of individuals of a certain race and a surge in racism. By holding an entire race accountable for the actions of one evil dictator or a particular corrupt organization, we allow our own society's way of thinking to become corrupt and prolong the existence of racism.



The image above is a textbook example of demonizing the “enemy,” which in this case should be terrorist organizations such as the Taliban or Al Qaeda, but instead encompasses Muslims as a whole. Of course, the character portrayed in it is wearing a turban and robes, an image that we’re all too familiar with associating to Muslims. It mocks Islam and those who practice it that claim that it is a “tolerant” religion, by basically saying that the only thing they actually tolerate are terrorists and suicide bombers. And women, in the degrading and sexist fashion that they are known to practice. Because of this demonization, they are seen as less than human for following practices that we see as uncivilized and even animal-like. This is an unfair generalization of the Muslim people and is effective in giving them a negative image. It is unfortunate that the media and cartoons like this are successful in influencing our opinions of people of this background, and that whether or not we agree with these views, every day we are exposed to these messages. Just like society during WWI was influenced by this type of propaganda, so are we in modern day. And it will always remain as one of the most powerful ways to distort and corrupt the perception humans have of one another.

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### Re: A Distorted View P S

by Ren Rasmussen - Saturday, May 17, 2014, 10:18 PM

Although the last remark is meant to be funny it really focuses on Americas equality. We are all about restoring peace to the world and though that comes equality to be apart in this world. Although I still don't think women in the U.S. are treated as equals to men nation wide we don't like to have other countries say anything bad or suggest what we are doing is wtong. So we will fight for it

which masks it a little bit here on our on soil.

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**Image source:**  

by Roy Fernandez - Sunday, May 18, 2014, 2:01 AM

<http://freethoughtblogs.com/taslima/2013/03/22/islam-is-a-tolerant-religion/>

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