

# Critique article reviews example

[Society](#), [Terrorism](#)



\n[toc title="Table of Contents"]\n

\n \t

1. [Introduction](#) \n \t
2. [Summary](#) \n \t
3. [Conclusion](#) \n \t
4. [Reference](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

Analysis of “ On Terror,” by Philip E. Devine and Robert J. Rafalko

## **Introduction**

There have been several views on terrorism. However, research on terrorism differs from the standard social science research. As one is dealing with underground organizations, often there is little or incomplete data. Terrorism is like a war in the shadows that creates massive publicity. For the majority of researchers, it can be dangerous to do investigative research in danger zones, and therefore, majority of the research is carried out on the basis of reports released by the government and media news stories. Research on terrorism has more often been criticized as it is believed that most of the writing on terrorism is based on a number of questionable assumptions. For example, a common assumption is that the West stands for justification and is the common target of terrorism. It is assumed that the aim of terrorism is to undermine democracies. I argue that Devine and Rafalko should broaden their studies to not only terrorism in the absence of government, but government terrorism as well.

## Summary

Devine and Rafalko start with diverse views on terrorism and call for better research on terrorism. They argue from a philosophical viewpoint that very little is found on the subject of terrorism that is often portrayed as a romanticized heroism or senseless violence. Many researchers look at terrorism to be a political strategy that involves violence directed against the innocent. There are different arguments in defense of terrorism. It is considered as the cheapest form of warfare. The second view contends that terrorism draws public attention towards institutional injustice, while the third outlook is that public holds a Collective Guilt that makes them silent on terrorism. For the terrorist, there is nothing as right or wrong and for him and his goals are supreme.

Defining terrorism is not easy, according to Devine and Rafalko, but it is certainly different from the ordinary crime or atrocities that occur during international and civil wars. Terrorism term is often used rhetorically to glorify the acts of revolutionaries. The word terrorism and violence go together. Killing is the central form of violence. However, holding someone prisoner or inflicting physical pain, or putting one in trauma are no less than terror, although there is no killing involved. Even during the wartime, one comes across several acts of violence like bombing, and the violence here is not looked upon as terrorism. Devine and Rafalko give the example of killing of a pet that may be violent but certainly not an act of terrorism.

Terrorists commonly use violence and fear to achieve their political motives. There are three elements working behind the political strategy of a terrorist, as stated by Devine and Rafalko. The terrorists may take public responsibility

for their action or create the right kind of violence. The victims may be innocent but are associated symbolically with their target state. The next element is of motivation, and the third viewpoint is that the terrorists simply move ahead with no clear aims of terror. However, sometimes, the victims of terrorism are in no way involved in the conflict the terrorists are pursuing. After defining the key elements working behind a terrorist act, Devine and Rafalko take a look at governmental and non-governmental terror, the governmental terror will probably claim more victims as the non-governmental groups will be relatively unlimited. The non-governmental groups will voice their opinions on the motives and justification behind their terrorist activities. These terrorists wish to be seen as reformers and romantics, and thus expect more sympathy for their cause and activities. Looking inside the mind of a terrorist, he commits those acts for a cause and is selfless. He is laying down his life for a justified cause and believes that his actions are absolutely moral. The last resort measures like civil disobedience and revolutions are occasionally defensible. However, there is a stark difference between terrorism and revolutions or civil disobedience (Devine and Rafalko). Civil disobedience does not resort to violence while terrorism believes in using violence to attain the objectives. Revolution may be violent or nonviolent. The perpetrators of civil disobedience and revolutions have clear objectives in their mind, while terrorism may be ambiguous of its goals.

Devine and Rafalko argue that there are three views justifying terrorism. The Economy of Scale does not support civil disobedience as it remains ineffective to achieve a political strategy. Revolution too doesn't seem to be

the right option as it remains beyond the reach of the activist. Terrorism remains the final option and the cheapest form of warfare. Conscious raising argument related to terrorism holds that the public often chooses to ignore the wrongdoings of the government and the act of terrorism can wake them up. Here, the terrorists take the role of leaders and feel responsible for awakening the public. The collective Guilt argument sees the public again as ignorant of the offenses happening around them. The terrorists believe that if the public is not a part of the solution, it is the problem itself. Thus, the terrorists become a kind of revolutionaries as in their view; the victims are not innocent. They take examples of Aldo Moro kidnappings, the oppression of Palestinians and the murder of Israeli athletes in 1972 Munich Olympics to explain terrorism. The general objections that can be raised against any terrorist activity are that these activities are counter reproductive; they lack vision and consistency. The campaigns of terror are directed in those societies where other means of appeal are allowed for injustice. No matter how strongly justified an act of terrorism is, it only ends in developing warfare. Even if a terrorist act is successful in achieving its objective, it conducts chaos. It is difficult to meet the outrageous demands of the terrorists. The terrorists can justify their acts of violence by keeping an adamant position of moral righteousness. Their activities are based on the significance of a conclusive action which is designed to set a series of events leading to a kind of society that the terrorist desire. Devine and Rafalko conclude with the outlook of the terrorist conflicts with that of a civilized society. He rejects the principles of political prudence, tolerance, and rationality. The nation can defeat the terrorist's subordination of procedural

values by acting on its central beliefs. He refuses to characterize violence in black and white and often sees a sporadic moral defense for some acts of violence in the name of democracy. The ideologies of terrorism differ from the liberal ideas of democracy.

Devine and Rafalko have done a good job on defining terrorism, and analyzing as to how terrorism finds its place within the critical security studies in world politics. It is difficult deciding what to study and what not to study and to whom the studies are directed. I agree with the fact that the critical approaches towards terrorism are not new. However, I feel that the challenging analysis of terrorism is necessary. Devine and Rafalko do not give the reasons behind the roots of terrorism.

There could be a debate on what actions or policies should a country struck by terrorism adhere to. As Rengger comments on Jean Bethke Elshtain's recent book "Just war against terror" where US response to September 11 was justified force. It sets one thinking if the nature of terrorism can expand the morally and ethically viable options available. Isn't it more important to get to the roots of the terrorism? The moral symmetry of the society gets betrayed when it behaves violently in response to violence.

The studies related to terrorism should take an approach geared more toward conflict resolution and the development of terrorism. There is much public support in some countries for activities defined as terrorism. The terrorist activities are a part of deeper project that use violence, especially against civilians. I feel that terrorism studies should take a broader outlook when seen from the platform of liberal traditions of world politics. Devine and Rafalko take a narrow approach on the terrorism studies.

I agree with Jackson et al, that the current intellectual climate needs to follow new approaches to thinking about terrorism that need thorough and systematic examination. Terrorism need to be explored in detail and in the political-economic contexts. There is a pressing need for more methodical research with an emphasis on Western state terrorism and the terrorism practiced by Western allies. There is very little understanding on interaction between militants and non-militants and role played by onlookers such as state forces and political elites. (Gunning, 2009).

Taddeo reports that when United States declared war against terror, "terrorism" was branded as a universal enemy and U. S. has followed several different approaches since from counterterrorism to counterinsurgency as well as from enemy-centric to population-centric warfare. However, the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan remains complicated. The approach on terrorism should be based on the equal rights of all, and not from the perspective of victims..

The language of the terrorism has changed everywhere in the aftermath of 11 September, according to Copeland. The language of the "new" terrorism is apparent everywhere in the aftermath of 11 September. The terrorism in 21st century has a new face. It has a mindset of destroying not just the peace and prosperity in the world, but also cultures or all of humanity. The old model of political terrorism from the mid-twentieth century is taking on a new pattern today with different actors, roles and motivations.

## **Conclusion**

There could be a lot more discussion and debates on terrorism. Terrorism is a violent crime, but the nature of the crime is different from other crimes.

The reality is that the mainstream of studies on terrorism remained unchanged, and there is a need to break with mainstream studies to study the growth and rise of terrorism. There is a need to pay attention to both state and non-state terrorism. Devine and Rafalko focus more on the non-governmental terrorism, while governmental terrorism too should be given attention.

I feel that it is essential to understand the root cause of the terrorist activities. For example, why the enmity between the West and the Middle Eastern countries began in the first place? Terrorism keeps on changing its meaning with time and there are no simple answers to terror. The more we try to look at the roots behind, the better will we be able to understand why those attacks take place in the first place, no matter how unjustifiable and horrific as they were.

People who are in favor of terrorist activities, look for different meanings and definition of terrorism. The label of terrorism steers towards notions of evil and abnormal psychology. There is a need to design a strategy with a new approach and agenda that will explore the changing role of terrorism.

## **Reference**

Devine, Philip. And Rafalko, Robert." On Terror." American Academy of Political and Social Science (1982). Print.

Rengger, Nicholas. Just a War against Terror? Jean Bethke Elshtain's Burden and American Power. 80 Vol. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2004. Print.

Jackson, R., Breen Smyth, M., and Gunning, J., 2007. „ The Case for a Critical Terrorism Studies", American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Convention, 30 August – 2 September 2007, Chicago, USA.



Gunning, J., 2009. „ Social Movement Theory and the Study of Terrorism", in Jackson, R., Gunning, J., and Breen Smyth, M., eds., Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda, Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 156-77.

Taddeo, Valentina. " U. S. Response to Terrorism: A Strategic Analysis of the Afghanistan Campaign." Journal of Strategic Security 3. 2 (2010): 27-38.  
Print.

Copeland, Thomas. " Is the " New Terrorism" Really New?: An Analysis of the New Paradigm for Terrorism." The Journal of Conflict Studies 21. 2 (2001).  
Print.