

# Islamophobia essay example

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



## **How Media Played a Big Role in Manipulating America**

After 9/11, a new generation of bigotry started all over the world, mainly after President George Bush gave a famous speech which cleverly implied people who worship Islam are terrorists. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. He said, " Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime" (G. W. Bush 2001).

The whole speech repeated the dualistic notions of good versus evil repeatedly. It has become the popular style of reporting in the media both in print and radio as well as on television. The phrases have reverberated throughout America's culture of media so often that people seem to think that there is some truth to the phrases. Because so many people know so little about Arabian people and the culture they are suspicious and fearful after years of having their ears bludgeoned with the nasty phrases

Not only is the rhetoric designed to emphasize two opposites (good and evil) leaving no discussion about what comes between the two; it is also filled with words of fear and hatred. Again from the speech referenced in the first paragraph here are some of the phrases. In parenthesis I have added the questions the media never addresses as is their professional duty.

(1) " Why do they hate us?" (Who is ' they'? Do ' they' really hate us?)

(2) " These terrorists kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life." (Which terrorists? The right wing extremist? the anarchists? the

people who kill doctors at women's health clinics? No, unfortunately the Muslims are targeted.)

(3) " We are not deceived by their pretenses to piety. . . heirs of the murderous ideologies of the 20th century . . they follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism.

. . . and they will follow that path all the way, to where it ends: in history's unmarked grave of discarded lies."

(Does this sound like a reasoned train of thought to anyone. The alliteration of " pretenses to piety" is a good sound effect. The phrase " in history's unmarked grave of discarded lies" is certainly effectual in giving a visual sense of doom and effectual in creating emotional responses in the audience . . . but what does this whole paragraph mean? It is a whole mess of words constructing rhetoric without logic and which the media did not wholeheartedly dissect and investigate.)

It is surprising to learn that now a prominent level of harassment is being reported in the United States of America, no matter your religion, if you look like an Arab, you are right away labeled a terrorist. This raises a question: what made an issue extinct hundreds of years ago reemerge?

Certainly, the media play a vital role in manipulating the facts and give indistinct images of Islam, thus increasing the pressure against Muslims and Arabs. One of the ways Rendall and Macdonald ( 2008) report that the media has been successful is their willingness to accept self-proclaimed experts as " Islamic terrorism experts." They also report that one of the strains of Muslim bashing evident in the media is the view that " Islam is inherently violent - " a bloody, brutal type of religion"" while another strain is the point

of view that the moderate Muslim should be speaking out against the extremist (Rendall & Macdonald, 2008). An example of this was when Glenn Beck asked Rep Keith Ellison (D. Minn.) to “ Sir, prove to me that you not working with our enemies.” (Rendall & Macdonald, 2008)

How does a “ news host” like Glenn Beck get away with such atrocious behavior which mainly shows his ignorance? I suggest that because the station, FOX News is owned by Rupert Murdoch and has a monopoly stranglehold on the business so other channels can’t have a chance to offer a challenge or even a different point of view.

Islamophobia is a derogatory term used to describe a wide range of hostile attitudes toward Islam. No matter who was behind 9/11 or who caused it, the media played a key role in manipulating Americans which increasing tensions against Muslims. In 2010, a politician on CNBC said, “ If you are a Saudi male between 18 and 35 years old, and your name is Ahmed or Mohammed, you should be searched naked in the airport.” It may be just a live-show ploy to shock the audience, but is this not just the feeling of what people think?

In 2010, in John F. Kennedy airport, I was going back to Saudi Arabia on vacation. Once I reached the boarding check, I found a lovely lady who smiled at me and asked for any kind of identification. I gave her my passport. When she saw that I was an Arab, she frowned and kept looking at me. Then she wrote at my boarding pass “ SA”, which stands for Saudi Arabia. I did not think of it as a big deal, so I went to the checkpoint. I was searched like I had never been searched before in my life, all because I am an Arab!

In another example from 2010 I was going to Chicago with my friends, on the way we stopped at Starbucks. While ordering my drink I found an old lady near the cashier's stand. She approached me and started talking to me. We spent almost 20 minutes talking about Chicago, and she talked about her son in Iraq. Then she asked me, where am I from. I told her Saudi Arabia. She honestly did not know where Saudi Arabia is located. I said in the Middle East; once I said that her face flushed. Then she said, " Oh!" She walked away from me as if I had said something rude.

I had not been in the USA for very long at that time. I was truly shocked. I asked myself why do these people hate us? Are we as miserable to be around as they think?

Last month, a terrorist " accident" which happened in the United Kingdom was caused by a radical Christian man. What was remarkable: that the American media called it an accident. On the other hand, some media called it terrorist attack done by a Christian fundamentalist youth. Then the American media argued about it - why should we say it had been done by Christian extremist man? Instead we should just say simply a " terrorist attack" - no need to mention his religion. This way of sugar coating a terrorist attack is not acceptable at this time. In professional journalism it is never appropriate. Words and their accuracy should be the ultimate priority when reporting the news.

In such cases of duality if I may say, hypocrisy, does it make a difference if someone is black or even a Muslim? In these cases, we need to look at the facts behind such stunningly unjust behavior.

In simple terms, if the majority of American families watch television at least

three hours a day and they are offered such a distorted image of Islam or Arab, perhaps it is a natural result to have that kind of hatred against Arabs or Muslims. The television is a great provider of propaganda rather than knowledge.

In an experiment, a group of Americans was asked to write the first thing that came into their minds about Islam. Most of the people's answers were based on violent events such as 9/11 or Palestinian bombers. Their answers all were a result of what the media did as a fear monger which it is exactly what the goal of media. Instead of acting as the "fourth estate of democracy" they have become the "lapdog of the government" (Boehlert, 2006).

Indeed, it is the new age of racism. The politicians knew the effect the media has on the American people, and they manipulate it and then they reap the fruit of it. The War in Iraq was based on demagoguery: "either you are with us or against us." Make no mistake, each war America went to was aided and abetted on media manipulation of facts and of the audience.

Sharia Law is a new issue currently, on the surface. Nowadays, books and TV programs have started to talk about Muslims trying to justify the Sharia Law in America. Is it going to happen? It is not even logical! But the media is trying again and again to create the orgy of imaginary that "Sharia Law" will "kill us all if we do not stop it!"

The irony is that a huge percent of Americans never meet Muslims throughout their entire lives, yet they make judgments based on what they hear and see in the media.

"Only Islam is the enemy, and Islam is not an acceptable religion." We hear

that type of characterization often in the media from politicians, priests, and others. How the audience behaves perhaps can be considered a normal reaction; especially if they have no self motivation to explore the allegations to discern whether or not they are truthful.

Yes, it is a type of freedom of speech, but there is an acceptable line between racism and sympathy. Freedom of speech historically has meant speech that does not cause harm to others.

The media war against Islam and Arabic people should be stopped. A person is not an enemy simply by dressing differently or holding different beliefs from others. The slogan from former President George Bush “ either you are with us or against us,” is the spark that started the fire of Islamophobia.

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