



John Doe

Belief Systems 

 Individuals often establish ~~definite~~ belief systems in regard to attitudes, behaviors, religions, and other areas ~~of life~~ based on beliefs and practices that they accepted during the early stages of maturation when many of their interactions were influenced by their families, who both supported and practiced the same traditions. In America the customary stance toward these varied opinions is to view them with tolerance, regardless of how strange or wrong the belief or action might seem. While individually people may ~~TOTALLY~~ disagree with others' beliefs and habits, under ordinary circumstances, most Americans would either offer friendly advice or completely ignore situations that would not lead to dangerous or deadly outcomes. However, it seems to me that some people within practically all groups, regardless of their designations, sometimes decide to carry their belief systems to the EXTREME. Extremists move into the category of fanatics or radicals who seek to establish their belief systems as the only means for achieving a desired outcome. When people become fanatics, they believe that their ideals are the only acceptable way to live ~~some~~ will seek punishment or destruction of others who do not believe or act as they do. At that point, extremists become terrorists because they try to force others to accept their practices in such areas as social behaviors, politics, and religion. 

Terrorists frequently want everyone to practice the same social behaviors. Dressing in a particular style, eating specific foods, practicing distinctive manners, dividing males and females, and other behaviors are so important to certain groups that they are willing to penalize or put to death anyone who does not follow their rules. The Taliban, a Muslim terrorist organization in Afghanistan, believes that girls should not be educated. They consider this to be so important that in October, 2012, a member of this organization shot a fourteen-year-old girl

 named Malala Yousufzai for saying that girls had the right to be educated. Actions such as these are labeled terrorism in the United States because the Taliban demands obedience to its lifestyle style choices, and if obedience is not forthcoming, they are willing to kill or hurt people of all ages who do not accept their extremist viewpoints.  I believe that groups who are willing to use extreme punishment or kill for their belief systems can reasonably be labeled terrorists. 

Terrorists are also found in politics. Because each country of the world has the right to establish its own brand of governmental practices, governments around the world have different procedures and rules that make certain actions legal and others illegal. The different approaches for establishing regulations for the behaviors of people who live within the boundaries of different nations frequently lead to unrest and threats of war between countries that practice ideals that are not compatible with one another. At present, North Korea and the United States are at odds with one another over political paradigms, models for government: North Korea is communistic, while America is a democratic republic.

 The government of North Korea sees America as so great an enemy that it is threatening to attack the United States with a nuclear bomb (Sangar and Sang-Hun). North Korea is now viewed as an aggressor or terrorist nation because it continues to threaten America with its nuclear capabilities (Sangar and Sang-Hun). Because China, another communist country and neighbor of North Korea, has indicated that it is sympathetic with North Korea, the danger of a nuclear attack is seen as an increasingly possible situation that could cause great damage to the American people and the infrastructure of the United States (Sangar and Sang-Hun). Groups or countries who insist that their politics are the only means to govern, to the point that they will kill anyone who expresses an opposing viewpoint, can also be labeled as terrorists. 



Terrorists also exist within many religious groups in his documentary *The Third Jihad*, Dr. Zuhdi Jasser, a moderate Muslim American who once served as the official physician of the United States Congress, presents a frightening picture of radical Muslims, known as *wahhabists*. These extremists believe that exhibiting tolerance or open-mindedness toward any belief system, other than the brand of Islam that their specific group practices, should lead to violent reactions, even against other Muslims.



Since September 11, 2001, Muslim moderates have frequently been treated as infidels or unbelievers by *wahhabists* because they practice the Muslim faith in a moderate manner. These terrorists believe that all people should practice an orthodox belief system that follows an extreme set of rules known as *Shari'a*. Those who fail to practice their faith in the same manner as the radicals are labeled *infidels*, unbelievers who are worthy of death (*Qur'an*, Sura 47). Moderate Muslims are as outcast among the radical groups as the people of other religions, such as Jews, Christians, Buddhists, Taoists, and all other non-Muslim religious groups (Jasser). Religious terrorists do not believe in compromise or differences of opinions to the point that they are willing to physically hurt or kill anyone who does not practice their religion or who practice it differently than they do.

Terrorists are a growing problem ~~in many areas of life~~. Americans need to become aware that some groups and nations harbor great resentment toward lifestyles that are not duplicates of theirs.



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