

From HYDRA to Al-Qaeda: Depictions of Terrorism in Comic Books

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Synopsis

Comic books have often reflected the world at the time of publication. Terrorism became a prominent aspect of several comic storylines after 9/11, but the concept of terrorist groups in comic books is far more common than one might think. This paper looks at how terrorist groups have been used in US comic books, how events in comics have later come true, and how depictions of terrorists have changed in both positive and negative aspects.

Biography

Cord Scott has a Doctorate in American History from Loyola University-Chicago. He has had several articles published on aspects of 9/11 in comic books. His dissertation centered on the use of war comics as a reflection of American cultural history.

Essay

Hail Hydra! Immortal Hydra! We shall never be destroyed! Cut off a limb and two more shall take its place! We serve none but the master—as the world shall soon serve us!
Hail Hydra! – Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, *Strange Tales* #135

The idea of terrorism has been a constant one since the era of comics began. Various groups with names like HYDRA and AIM threatened hard working citizens in comic book realms for years. The comics also incorporated real events and attacks into the storylines, so it was not surprising that many of the comics that were published soon after 9/11 had some sort of terror attack element in the plot.

This paper looks at how the idea of the terrorist group developed in comics and how the real world and the comic world occasionally mixed to create realistic threats or situations that reflected society. There are numerous examples of terrorism within comic books from a myriad of companies. However, the main focus of this paper will be on the terrorist groups developed by Marvel comics in the mid-1960s and will work into more modern comic books.

For many of the comic book creators the terrorist groups of fiction came from two general areas. The first source was from the main news stories of the day, especially in

the 1980s when terrorism became an almost common aspect of the nightly news. Second was the general fear of the unknown. Like the actual terrorists, the fear of people secretly plotting violence against a defenseless population, and possibility of some weapon that could cause untold terror or destruction, led comic book creators to use terrorists as a great ‘enemy’ that could strike from anywhere and then blend into the background. For example, during the 1960s and ‘70s people from well established middle or upper class families became members of terrorist groups, or the Jihadists of 9/11 who blended into the crowd beforehand seem to bear this out.

Some of the more famous terrorist leaders in comic books were megalomaniacal in their own right from the Red Skull (two forms, one a Nazi and the other a Communist threat), to the oriental villain The Mandarin, who also sought world conquest. In current comics there are some villains that are modeled to look like Osama bin Laden. The comics looked at in this paper include *Pete the P.O.ed Postal Worker*, *Civilian Justice*, as well as other minor comics. In addition, mainstream comics like *Captain America* will be examined to see how terrorists in the Middle Eastern extent are presented.

Origins

One important aspect of the concept of terrorism is how it is defined. The simple definition of terrorism is an act that incites fear or uncertainty. Most villains within comic books fit that definition. For this paper, however, the context of terrorism must be further defined. The definition used is as follows:

Acts of violence committed by groups that view themselves as victimized by some notable historical wrong. Although these groups have no formal connection with governments, they usually have the financial and moral backing with sympathetic governments.¹

From the start, comic book creators used villains of all stripes to give conflict to the storylines. Many of the 1930s villains had connection to crime (the Depression being the main political event) big business, or totalitarian movements around the world. In the early WWII era comics, real Nazis or Japanese enemies, like their comic book counterparts, were attempting to take over the world. From a propaganda standpoint, the Nazis were depicted “better” and had some redeeming qualities. By this comment, the Nazis were often associated with Hitler and the symbology of the Nazi party. If German nationals were used as characters, they could be good guys fighting for the Allied cause, or at least clown-like in their enemy depictions. The depiction of the Japanese, however, was one in which the entire race was an enemy and should be considered duplicitous. This sort of animosity tied into the treatment of the enemy

combatants in World War II, as was mentioned in John Dower's landmark book *War without Mercy*.

Villains and Their Role in Terrorist Groups

The villains in comic books often reflected real world fears. At the same time, fears of the unknown, which comic books often dealt primarily in (the concept of superpowers, as an example) the use of secret organizations to strike fear and unrest into society made for fine fodder. Secret societies from the Orient, based on the *tongs* – or organized protection groups – fed into discussions of groups bent on takeover of all things Western. The real fear of Chinese communism and its spread throughout Asia in the late 1940s and 1950s, made this connection not surprising.

The key to these secret organizations in the comics was that they were driven in their purpose of destroying all that America stood for, such as freedom of speech, individual drive and achievement or anything else that seemed “American”. The organizations were secret in their membership; their leaders cloaked in myth and superstition, but at the same time showed certain megalomaniacal tendencies. They also tied into the older real fears of villains who did wield power, such as former Nazis who escaped justice in Europe. With compelling elements like these, it was easy to create a group in the comics that threatened society.

In 1965, Stan Lee who was head of development at Marvel Comics was experimenting with new ideas and characters to invigorate his successful comic book lines. Earlier he had helped develop the successful characters Spiderman and the Fantastic Four, which appealed to a wider, more adult audience (teens as opposed to those under 13). He had also helped to create a character in the war comic genre, Sgt. Fury. To further gain readership, he took Fury, aged him to the then “present” of 1965, and made him a secret agent of the CIA. When told of a threat from a new, powerful entity, Fury was promoted to the head of the newly created SHIELD. Thus entered the first major terrorist threat to SHIELD: HYDRA.

The head of HYDRA in the early issues morphed and changed over time. One Supreme Hydra was a master of disguise who changed his identity to avoid detection. At one point, he became Emir Ali-Bey. Later on in the series, it was an old enemy of Fury's from World War II who became leader of HYDRA. The German Baron von Strucker was a fanatic Nazi, complete with the stereotypical dueling scar and monocle. In the 1960s, in a variation of that ideology, he sought to control the world through other means: specifically through using America's technology and free society against itself. One of the key distinctions was that HYDRA was run by “normal” businessmen. They

blended into general society and were much more difficult to spot, hence were far more dangerous. This tactic was important for the 9/11 hijackers as well.

In this regard, HYDRA emulated practices that later became a hallmark for most real terrorist groups: the use and manipulation of the media for their own purposes. The hallmark of any terrorist groups is to get its message out to the people as well as the threats of what will happen if their demands are not met. The use of the hydra as a symbol was important as it showed the worldwide reach of the group (as with modern Al Qaeda and its variants). In addition, two slogans in the stories tied into terrorists. The first was "We follow none but the Master – as the world shall soon serve us!" The other phrase "Cut off a limb and two more shall take its place" also references the fact that because the groups are often independently driven as a cell, a fear of never defeating a group is a real possibility.

Another aspect of terrorism is that the terrorists themselves know that they are at a disadvantage against an enemy like the United States. Therefore terrorists often attack what are termed "soft targets": civilian transportation networks, gathering places or anyplace that can hinder military attacks or blur the lines between civilian and combatant. The current term from the US military is "asymmetrical warfare." The reason why this aspect of terrorism is important is that the style of fighting was most often encountered in Vietnam during the US fighting there (officially 1964-1973). In a considerable aspect of historical foreshadowing, the comic book *Blazing Combat* even showed an aspect of Vietnamese interrogation that became synonymous with terrorist interrogation later on: water boarding.

Within the storylines of these early terrorist based acts, one pivotal aspect is a fear of some subversive groups gaining access to a weapon of mass destruction. The early Nick Fury issues had him fighting HYDRA, as they developed and planned to use a betatron bomb (akin to a nuclear weapon more powerful than any previous). Again the central theme is that the world needs to be somehow purified of its detrimental aspects, be it infidelity or unbelief, or the negative aspects of consumerism and capitalism. For readers it was a fear of nuclear weapons being used to sow terror in all things American.

An additional terrorist group that threatened American society in the comic book pages was a group known as Advanced Ideas Mechanics (A.I.M.). The organization, first introduced in *Strange Tales #146*, told of a group of intelligent members who designed weapons for a greater society based on the supremacy of technology. The group later was seen as an offshoot of HYDRA, but its comic book origins mirror many real groups. As with many of the Palestinian liberation groups in the 1960s, fractures occurred when people approached their ultimate goal (liberation of Palestine from

Israelis) from different aspects: be it rule from communist leadership (PLFP) or attacks against all people in creation of an Islamic state (variations of Hezbollah). As with modern groups like Al-Qaeda (meaning “the base”) the idea is that a charismatic leader looks to impose his will to create a society that is based on his worldview. The leader’s ideas are supreme, even if it goes against common practice or even logic.

The news reports of terrorist acts, combined with the taking of hostages in Tehran, Iran in November 1979 lead to the creation of a new war themed comic that dealt with terrorism in some form. This time the name of the comic book took its title from the Hasbro action figure of the 1960s: *G.I. Joe: A Real American Hero*. As with Nick Fury fighting HYDRA, the Joes were called upon to fight a fictional army of terrorists and weapons dealers in the guise of COBRA. The enemy in this case wore helmets like the Germans. Their face covers were vaguely similar to kaffeyahs, so that their identities were never truly known. They operated within American cities, like various sleeper cells, waiting to strike when the time was right. The series often interwove real acts into the story lines. For instance, the ninja-trained Joe code-named Snake-eyes was a member of the failed rescue attempt in the Iranian desert in April 1980. He was actually scarred in the fire that consumed one of the helicopters.

What sets these terrorist groups apart from reality is how they are presented. The comic book terrorist groups have distinct features that are not common among terrorists. In the comics, the terrorists have formal uniforms, carry standard weapons (AK-47 assault rifles are common amongst terrorists and formal armies) and have a membership in the, presumed thousands. To hide such groups with a massive infrastructure would be nearly impossible. Wearing uniforms would also offer some sort of protection under the Geneva Convention on the treatment of combatants. The terrorists in reality rely on their ability to blend in, so wearing a uniform would be counterproductive. Terrorists rarely wish to give their true numbers. It is far better to fight from the shadows and invoke a fear of an army of terrorists thousands strong, when the true membership may only be in the hundreds at most.

While the stories often dealt with the fight against COBRA or occasionally other variants of the Soviet Union, there were some stories that dealt with real-style terrorists or locations of terrorists. One example was in *GI Joe: Special Missions #3* (Feb., 1987), in which an American pilot defects to a Middle Eastern country and hires on as a mercenary pilot. While not exactly a terrorist theme, it does deal with the Middle East as a locale, and the Joes up-armor a van similar to what groups like Hezbollah were also known do to. The plot of *GI Joe: Special Missions #11* (June, 1988) dealt with a terrorist attack on an American post exchange (PX) in West Germany. The terrorists in this case were based on the Bader-Meinhoff Group, a group of disaffected Germans who looked to use terrorism to help create a unified German state under Communist rule. The story,

which showed Americans killing terrorists of both genders, ended with an American victory. Later on, the Joes were used to handle some missions in the Middle East or elsewhere. The last of the three significant terrorist or Middle Eastern themes was *Special Missions #13* (Sept., 1988), in which training was done to help evaluate probationary Joes. The stereotypes of Middle East inhabitants were there, but not as dominant as they were towards the Japanese in comics of the 1940s.

The real world Middle East terrorist attacks in the 1980s served as media fodder for different venues, whether it was TV, movies or comic books. Given the sensational acts carried out for maximum exposure, it was no surprise that these events became part of story lines for comic books. Due to the seeming impotence against these actions, many forms of popular media started to embrace the vengeance fantasy, in which those who acted against US interests would be punished. In comic books this vengeance took form with a character that had often been used to crack down on the Mafia or drug gangs: Frank Castle AKA the Punisher. While the character had been in the Marvel lineup since 1974, the character was finally given his own title and monthly comic starting in 1986. The terrorist acts in the Middle East were at their zenith within the American news sources. The first time that the Punisher fought Middle Eastern terrorists was in *Punisher #6* and *#7*. In these two connected stories, American gangs are selling plutonium to a mysterious Middle Eastern man named Yasir (a throwback to Yasser Arafat, head of the PLO). In this depiction, Yasir and his bodyguard Hasan “The Mountain” fall into the stereotypes: Yasir wears a fez, and Hasan wears a turban. The plot involved using a construction crane to spread plutonium in downtown New York as a premiere of a theatrical production was letting out, thereby contaminating the prominent people in the audience as well as making downtown Manhattan uninhabitable. This idea of a “dirty bomb” was part of a real plot purportedly ordered by Al Qaeda in the days after 9/11. The scouting mission that would have allowed a bomb to attain maximum potential in Chicago was carried out by an American named Jose Padilla, who had converted to Islam while in prison.²

At the same time that revenge or vengeance fantasies were being played out in the mainstream comics from Marvel, others looked at the weakness of American actions as a holdover from Vietnam. Two comics that discussed the terrorist actions and the American impotence were *The American* by Mark Verheiden (Dark Horse) and *Reagan’s Raiders* from Solson Comics. The former used a fictional superhero called the American who was trying to halt a hijacking at the Beirut International Airport. The depiction of the terrorists was akin to the depictions in movies from the same time like Delta Force: Arab looking with dark glasses, wildish hair and an unshaven appearance. The rescue attempt went badly, and the American was killed. It was revealed in the story that the American was one of many who had served the role of the superhero, and

that as a PR image, he had actually *damaged* American credibility in conflicts. As with so many other comics that were trying to reach an adult audience, the story was not so much a revenge fantasy, but an indictment of the illegal and immoral actions of the US government in the Reagan era. The latter comic, *Reagan's Raiders* was a lesser known comic that was published in 1986, when the US was dealing with the terrorist acts in the Middle East. The comics took the basics of the Captain America creation story (a super soldier serum) and created a new superhero. The first issue of the three that were printed told of how Reagan, now a superhero as well as President of the United States, fought against a terrorist group known as the World Terrorist Organization (a slam on the World Trade Organization). The terrorists presented here were a mix of the HYDRA types as well as the stereotypes of the typical Arab terrorist of the 1980s – kaffeyeh, Semitic features, and a bomb vest.

The 1990s and the Re-emergence of Terrorists to Reflect the Uncertainty of a Unipolar World

With the end of the Cold War, the US emerged as the sole super-power. The “New World Order” led to interesting and frightening dynamics. The comic book industry tried to adapt to this new reality by inventing new villains for the standard superheroes, as well as have other characters deal with new realities. One character that adapted to the new worldview was the Punisher. One specific story, called *Punisher: the Empty Quarter* (1994), described how the terrorists around the world needed to work together for a common cause of defeating capitalism and Western thought. A meeting of all the terrorist groups was held in an old Roman fort in an area of North Africa known as the Empty Quarter. This meeting, called the International Freedom Fighters Convention, was a fictional conference that had classes in explosives, torture, media relations and related skills, but it was all controlled by a terrorist known as the Jackal. Eventually the Punisher with the help of Rose the Mossad agent, defeat this cabal of villains from a wider world wide threat. The use of the Jackal, the seminars, and the inter-group cooperation had some grounding in history. The real Jackal was Carlos Illyich Ramirez (who was killed around this time, along with another terrorist Abu Nidal), and various terrorist groups were known to assist with supply and training. In fact, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) received some of their training and assistance from groups in Libya in the 1980s.³

Many of the stories worked in an aspect of US government collusion in selling weapons of some form to various terrorist groups. The stories seldom dealt with the development of the group itself but more likely centered on the corruption within the US government. Another story from this time frame of the early 1990s that utilized this particular theme was *Captain America and the Punisher: Blood and Glory*. The three issue mini-series concentrated on the sales of weaponry to narco-terrorists as a way to

gain political clout within Washington DC. Again, the idea here was that Americans were not necessarily concerned about a terrorist attack within the country, but were more concerned about the uncertainties of the post-Cold War world. With the USSR gone, real security experts discussed the growing fear of unrestrained terrorist groups. Media creators at the same time used these shadowy groups to commit acts of carnage that would give better plot twists to the fictional stories. In effect, the real worries made for better entertainment. Unfortunately, that false hope of a more secure world was brought down along with the World Trade Center towers in the fall of 2001.

9/11 and the Depiction of the Event

It was not surprising that the two main attacks on US soil, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941, and the attacks on September 11, 2001, were immediately compared. But what was notable was how the particular media outlets tried to change and adapt to the new, more culturally sensitive world. Following Pearl Harbor, Japanese-Americans by virtue of their physical attributes, were singled out for attacks, as they were seen as “other”: easily distinguishable, and alien in culture, religion and habits. In the immediate aftermath of September 11th, there were some attacks against those who fit a stereotype of “Arab” but these attacks were limited, and often wrong. One man killed in Arizona was wearing a turban but was in fact not Muslim but Sikh.⁴ Comic book writers and artists tried to shy away from the WWII attacks and portray Americans as all inclusive, and in this regard, tried to approach depictions of terrorists as aligned with bin Laden. Therefore the terrorists often seem to dress and look more like bin Laden (white turban, Afghani style long shirt) rather than the traditional kaffeyeh and military-esque uniform like Yasser Arafat.

The first comics that came out to aid in raising relief funds were the *9/11: America Responds* books. In these stories, Arab children living in the US were initially singled out as different, but soon as the kids talked to each other, all realized that they were ultimately Americans. One story, “A Burning Hate” had an Arab boy noting that Superman was in fact a foreigner, and therefore was no different than he or his sister.

Another story that told of the threat of terrorism was a re-launched *Captain America*, created this time by John Ney Rieber and John Cassady. In the first six issue arc, the opening comic book described the events of the hijackings on 9/11 and then had Cap digging out at Ground Zero. Later on, the story involves a terrorist named Faysal al Tariq, who takes over a small town in the heart of America on Easter Sunday. The story has the hallmarks of any terrorist act: media coverage, symbology (day and the fact that the hostages are held in a Church) as well as children lured into (possibly) dying for a cause as martyrs.

Given the unrest and speculation about sleeper cells, biological attacks⁵ and worries about the uncertainty, it was not surprising that some of the actions tied into plot lines for comics. At the same time readers wanted to do something to empower themselves. Revenge fantasies have been an integral part of comics and 9/11 was no different. The writers wished to use the aspects of Islam against Jihadi terrorists. Some of the revenge fantasies were extreme to say the least. Perhaps one of the most “interesting” variations was the character *Pete the P.O.ed Postal Worker*, who in a specific one-shot comic, went to Afghanistan. After dealing with anthrax and the usual complaints against the US government and postal system, Pete (an unstable, psychotic and heavily armed postal carrier) is asked to send a letter from a small child to Osama bin Laden to explain why the attacks occurred. The story was a revenge fantasy, in that the media was either playing into al Qaeda’s hands or was liberal towards the Arab cause, and America was at fault for their own monsters. At the end of the book, bin Laden is fed to feral pigs (a huge insult) but only after a bloody battle. In fact desecration of the terrorists’ bodies was a common part of the revenge fantasy, as the same concept was used in the comic *Liberality*.

Another revenge fantasy comic that dealt with terrorism during this time was *SPECWAR*, produced by Frank Lauria of Peter Four productions. The series which ran for seven total issues centered on the role of special warfare units (hence the name SPECWAR). The first issue dealt with a terrorist attack on New York; in this case a takeover of a tanker in New York Harbor. Unlike the real attack, the comic book attack was foiled by US military action. The terrorists depicted were a mix of zealots and “American” looking criminals, and any attempt to blatantly tie Arab stereotypes was avoided visually. Again the key premise of the comics was a revenge fantasy against those who attacked the US. The later stories told of Iraqi attempts to gain bio-weapons through Somalia, and attacks against drug dealers in South America.

Perhaps the most “creative” revenge fantasy tied to the 9/11 attacks was the one issue comic *The Pro*. In the story, a mysterious alien gives superpowers to a prostitute to prove that anyone will rise to the greater heroic nature if called upon. While the story was one of adult satire and themes, one section stands out. As terrorists attack the Empire State building with a nuclear weapon attached to a fail-safe device, the Pro must leave her child and “colleagues” behind. As they plead for some sort of compromise, she gives a pointed argument: superheroes cannot stand on some moral high ground. They need to be vicious as they are fighting committed people who will not stop. Therefore people sometimes need to be violent. In the end, she dies but with a satirical flourish.

The New Depictions of Terrorists

By 2003, as the US geared up to fight against Iraq, the comic book creators tried to re-examine the role of terrorism in America, and how it was perceived. One concept that comic book creators tried to address was the liberal bias within the media towards the terrorist/freedom fighter issue. The comic writer that took the most “frontal” approach to this was Jim Mackay who wrote the comic book *Liberality*. The premise of the story was that by 2020, Osama bin Laden is now the Afghanistan ambassador to the UN, while President Chelsea Clinton and Vice President Michael Moore placate bin Laden’s every wish by calling him a freedom fighter. To further complicate matters, all conservative voices have been silenced, by law and through assassinations of conservative commentators. As was stated previously, Mackay also used images that went against Islam. In one scene, G. Gordon Liddy tortures a terrorist by threatening to wrap him in pigs’ skin and blood unless he gets what he wants. The letter section in the first comic book even had a person write in to say that the story was great, as many of the traditional comic book characters were being subverted to a liberal agenda.⁶

That same year, Ryan Inzana wrote and illustrated another book that took 9/11 as its basis. Entitled *Johnny Jihad*, it told the story of a disenfranchised American youth, and his road towards becoming a Jihadi for the Islamic cause. Inzana stated in the preface that the story was inspired by John Walker Lindh, an American looking for spiritual enlightenment who ended up being captured by US forces in the fall of 2001. Following a conviction for assisting in the death of CIA operative Mike Spann, Lindh was sentenced to 20 years in a US jail. Some Americans saw this as a travesty of justice, while others were surprised that an American could fall into this format. In the story, the real bin Laden was depicted as a spoiled foreigner within the midst of the Taliban, but his money was important to propel the cause.

As the insurgency in Iraq continued into the middle of the decade, the comics tried two different approaches to telling the story of an enemy. An innovative approach to telling the reality of the 9/11 attacks was presented by Sid Jacobson and Ernie Colon in their book *the 9-11 Commission Report: the Graphic novel*. In the book, the two were able to distill the massive government tome into a small, easily understandable book. Their second attempt, *After 9/11: Americas War on Terror (2001-)* told of the increased insurgencies and how the war in Iraq may not have been what was initially envisioned. In the books, terrorists were depicted as enemy but not through stereotypes. In this regard, their books were similar to the 1940s comics *True Comics*, which took real events and put them into simpler comic book form for wider understanding and readership.

The need for media exposure was also the premise of Anthony Lappe and Dan Goldman’s book *Shooting War*, which told of an internet journalist who was manipulated by the media from all ends, be they American government, CNN-like news corporations,

as well as the terrorists themselves. The story involved the main terrorist (a Che Guevara looking individual, with a kaffeyeh) who uses modern technology to bring about a war in India – a terrorist attack attributed to Muslim Pakistan – and the destruction of American values. The use of the internet to show executions of hostages was depicted in the book as well as the idea that with less news sources, news can in fact be manipulated.

In early 2011, DC comics released the book *Aaron and Ahmed: A Love Story*. What made this story interesting yet different in the depiction of terrorists was how one can be brought into a state of dying for a cause. Aaron Goodman, an Army psychiatrist is brought to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and the US detention center to gain information from the terrorists held there. Aaron had a personal connection to 9/11 as his fiancé was killed at the World Trade Center. As the story progresses Ahmed, a suspected terrorist held at Guantanamo, is seemingly manipulated to reveal information about the groups. In the end, the psychological manipulation on both sides ends with Aaron becoming a bomb, and destroying all that he lived for as a way of feeling better about his life. This sort of Stockholm Complex does exist, and is a part of the media manipulation aspect of terrorist groups. They both want sympathy for their cause or media exposure for their acts as a way of gaining recognition and perhaps change to the injustices they perceive.

Conclusions

As the war in Afghanistan enters its tenth year, the threats envisioned by the media are still around us. Most terrorist depictions in the comics try to incorporate some form of look akin to Osama bin Laden. With his death at the hands of Navy SEALs on May 1, 2011, the depictions of terrorists may continue to take verbal cues from bin Laden, or they may try to adapt to whatever personality emerges. As of September 6th, 2011, there will even be a comic book of the event, entitled *Code Name Geronimo* from IDW Publishing.

The comic story lines often tried to either incorporate real events, changed to give more of a fantasy and at the same time, the outcome was often altered to give a satisfying result: that of the death of the perpetrators of terrorism against the United States. By the late 1990s and particularly after September 11th, the political viewpoints of the artists and writers tried to be more judicial of stereotypes, or the stories were meant to convey political opposition to the real actions of the government (liberal leaning creators versus conservative leadership in government). Regardless, the reality of terrorism reflected in comics has made for thought provoking material and it will continue to do so into the future. While these comics were not all of those that dealt with

9/11 or terrorism in some form, they are a reflection of how people have used the event to tell stories of coping, vengeance, or heroism.

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¹ American Heritage New Dictionary of Cultural History, 2005, as found at <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/terrorism>. Accessed 6/17/2011

² <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/17/us/17padilla.html?ref=josepadilla> accessed August 23, 2011.

³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-12539372> accessed August 1, 2011.

⁴ http://www.religioustolerance.org/reac_ter1.htm accessed July 26, 2011.

⁵ In October 2001, anthrax was mailed to three places in the US including two newspaper outlets, as well as the US Senate offices of Tom Daschle and Patrick Lahey. The culprit of these attacks was Dr. Bruce Ivins. See <http://www.justice.gov/amerithrax/docs/amx-investigative-summary2.pdf>

⁶ The person noted the *DC: Red Son* mini-series in which Superman's origin story was one where he landed in the Ukraine in 1938. The cover to *Red Son #1* showed Superman with a Hammer and Sickle on his chest – sacrilege to any comic book fan by the correspondent's reaction in the letters page. See Don Mackay *Liberality* p. 32.